



Dateline

**INSIDE:
WINNERS
OF THE
OVERSEAS
PRESS
CLUB
AWARDS**

2003 SPECIAL ISSUE

WORDS OF WAR

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THE MIDEAST AND
THE WAR ON TERROR**

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Dateline

CONTENTS

10

Fire and Forget

Americans will soon weary of the Iraq war. Unfortunately, those on the ground can't change the channel

By Christopher Dickey

17

Mad as Hell at the Media

Many in the Mideast are openly hostile toward the American press

By Yaroslav Trofimov

20

Too Quiet in Afghanistan

Already, it's the forgotten war. So how does one remind Americans that it's far from over?

By Liz Sly

26

Bombers' Bankers

In the opaque world of Middle East finance, the truth is often elusive

By Vernon Silver

33

The OPC's Annual Awards

The stories and photos that stood out in 2002

53

Israel: How High?

It has made huge economic gains in 20 years—all of them checked by Mideast turmoil

By Neal Sandler

56

The 24/7 Correspondent

The Internet makes heavy demands on journalists overseas, but there's a big payoff

By Michael Moran



Also in this Issue

5 Letter from the President

6 Reciprocal Agreements and Privileges

8 Commentary: On a Leash in Baghdad

63 Protests: In Defense of Press Freedom



CRACKDOWN: ISRAELI SOLDIERS ROUND UP A GROUP OF PALESTINIANS ON THE STREETS OF RAMALLAH IN MARCH, 2002

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With respect and admiration for our colleagues in the field.



America's News Leader

Letter from the President

As this issue of *Dateline* goes to press, the war in Iraq continues, and with it an unprecedented role for the journalists covering this conflict. Reporters and photographers "embedded" with the troops or reporting on their own have provided accounts and images of startling immediacy. As in any war, the audience for international news suddenly goes up, as does the attention paid to the kind of journalism we honor in the Overseas Press Club's annual awards. The crucial work of foreign correspondents and photojournalists, as my *Newsweek* colleague Melinda Liu recently put it, reporting from Baghdad, is to help the "mosaic of truth come out."

Dateline this year focuses on the longstanding conflicts in volatile regions of the world. We have reports from the Iraq conflict and elsewhere in the Middle East, from Afghanistan, and from Israel and the Palestinian territories. I want to thank Bloomberg for providing staff and facilities for the production of this magazine, and to Michael Serrill for editing the publication. Thanks also to ex-presidents William Holstein and John Corporon and board member Cait Murphy for co-chairing the work of the judging panels. We are grateful to the judges for their serious and careful work and to those who sponsor our awards.

This year marks the 64th anniversary of the OPC awards dinner, and on this occasion I want to pay tribute to a true force of nature in our



FAY GILLIS WELLS

organization: Fay Gillis Wells, who died in December at 94.

Fay Wells—pioneer aviator, war correspondent and White House reporter—was one of the 13 journalists who founded the OPC in 1939. Born in Minneapolis, Fay dropped out of college in 1929 to take up flying lessons. A month later, she tumbled out of a plane that broke up in mid-air and parachuted to safety—a feat that made headlines. Later that year, she organized a group called The Ninety-Nines, women pilots whose first president was Fay's friend Amelia Earhart.

In the 1930s, Fay lived in Russia, covering aviation for the *New York Herald Tribune*, *The New York Times*, and the Associated Press. Later she reported from Ethiopia, Japan, and Washington, where she covered every administration from Johnson to Carter for Storer Broadcasting.

As she had done for so many years, Fay Wells came to New York last spring from her home in Alexandria, Va., to attend the OPC awards dinner. She expected to be with us at this year's dinner, and we miss her greatly. At the time of her death, her son, Linton Wells II, told the *Los Angeles Times* that his mother loved going to schools to talk to children. "To the girls in the class," her son said, "she'd say there is no limit to what you can do." We honor her memory and her indomitable spirit.

Alexis Gelber, President

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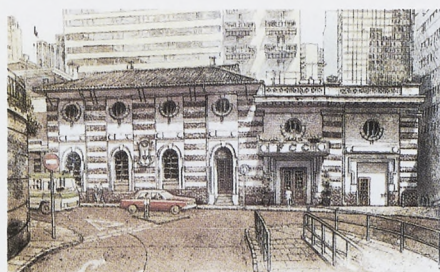
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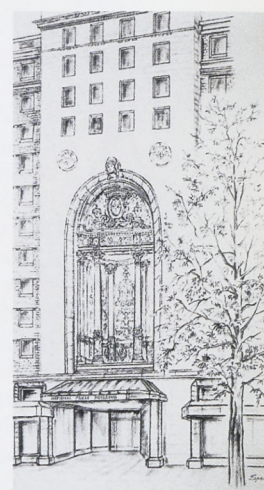
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By Rod Nordland

On a Leash in Baghdad

Only half a dozen blocks separate the Intercontinental Hotel in downtown Amman from the Iraqi embassy—too short a distance to bother with a taxi, so most of our colleagues went on foot. They called it the Walk of Shame, past the traffic circle known as Second Circle, then down a short eucalyptus-lined street to the embassy. There, press cards and passports in hand, they begged for visas. Nearly all press visas for Baghdad, especially to Western journalists, have been issued by Iraq's embassy in Jordan, partly because the only official route in was via Amman, either overland or by Jordan Airways (in defiance of the U.S. and British no-fly rules).

It was a walk we journalists made twice, or even three times, a day after the Iraq crisis began last August, in anticipation of Baghdad's approval. Once permission arrived via fax, a series of additional visits would be necessary before the actual visa stamp was on the page. Some of our colleagues would repeat that walk day after day for weeks, even months, on end. Some would finally get a visa, but usually it was good only for 10 days. Soon they would be back, doing the Walk of Shame again, meeting with the Iraqi press officers and trying to convince them that they had done "good" stories on their last stay, and would do better ones on their next.

Western journalists have always had to dissemble to get into Iraq, but this past year it became a lot harder to pull off. The Iraqis, alas, discovered Google. Only a handful of Iraqi officials were allowed Internet access, but among them were the Ministry of Information drones who vetted correspondents' visas. Those of us who didn't do "good" stories would be Googled; once found out, we simply didn't get visas to go back. Perhaps that's one of the reasons that in the past year the stories have gotten softer and softer, as the Iraqi crisis grew from August until the verge of war this March. Very little good, hard-hitting reporting came out of Iraq. Much of it read like press releases penned by the authorities in Baghdad, which of course is exactly how they wanted it. The authorities gave preference to journalists who had never been to Iraq, hoping their inexperience would misinform their work. Experienced hands were routinely weeded out. And those who did get in were running scared.

Granted, it was extremely hard to work independently in Iraq. Journalists were assigned government "minders," who typically accompanied them everywhere. Interviews with Iraqis, from private citizens to government officials, were pre-approved—though more often, interview requests were not approved. Even on those rare occasions

Most of the reporting that came out of Iraq before the war was puffery. The Iraqis, of course, couldn't have been happier

when journalists were able to meet with Iraqis privately, it was quickly evident that they were terrified. And with good reason, since they lived under a regime that routinely executed people for being distantly related to a suspected opponent. But, with honorable exceptions, little of that came through in the puff pieces that our colleagues inside churned out. Most didn't even mention the minders, much less the culture of fear and intimidation that thoroughly discolored and discredited nearly any effort at vox pop. Few made the extra effort to manage to find out what Iraqis were really thinking. And for those who did, their reward was to not have their visas renewed—or even expulsion from Iraq. Most opted to pull their punches.

It's perfectly understandable. Reporters were under great pressure from their organizations to get in and, once in, to stay. That became more and more true as war became imminent. Many felt it was more important to be inside, operating under restrictions and restraints, than to be outside. And many believed it was better to avoid controversy now, so they could be there when it really counted. But the result over these past months has been a terrible disservice to our readers and viewers. And it has no doubt had a large part to play in the shaping of public attitudes toward war against Iraq. People watched television footage of crowd scenes of Iraqis vowing to fight invaders, and cheering Saddam Hussein; the narrator rarely bothered to make it clear that such events were always staged—with severe penalties for not participating. Story after story quoted Iraqis adulating their president and denouncing George W. Bush.

Last October, the Iraqis briefly threw open the doors and let 3,000 journalists into the country to cover the referendum on Saddam's presidency. A shocking proportion of those journalists reported the referendum as if it were a serious electoral exercise. Even the 100% pro-Saddam vote was not greeted with much skepticism, and in fact, in reports by many European and Asian journalists, it wasn't even mentioned. The Iraqis paid the hotel and travel expenses for all the visiting journalists during that period. Those of us who insisted on paying our own way had a very hard time doing so; hotel managers said few refused to take the free ride, with the exception of British and American journalists. The idea was to create in the international mind the overwhelming impression of a domestically popular leader. To some extent, especially in Europe, it did that.

That occasion also presented an opportunity, for anyone willing to take it. In the scramble to vet such a large number of visa applications, quite



**IRAQI WOMEN
CHANT ANTI-U.S.
SLOGANS FOR THE
CAMERAS: THOSE
REPORTERS WHO
SPOKE TO IRAQIS
PRIVATELY HEARD
DIFFERENT VIEWS**

a few journalists who had covered Iraq in the past managed to get in, including me. There were so many of us there that the Ministry of Information didn't have enough minders to go around. Some of us went off the reservation, and succeeded in speaking to Iraqis privately. I was astonished at how many people were courageous enough to risk confiding to an American journalist that they hoped to see Saddam toppled from power. I met kids who had earlier in the day been cheering wildly at Saddam rallies, because they knew they had to, but were willing to express their real feelings in private. And I talked to parents who said they were tired of all of Saddam's wars but felt this one at least would be worth it, if it rid them of him. They were worried, of course, about what would arise in his place, but again and again people said things like, "We already have the devil for our leader, what could be worse?"

I wasn't the only one who did such stories, but there were very few of us—and we certainly didn't get our visas renewed. Later, the International Crisis Group sent an Arabic speaker to Iraq who secretly interviewed dozens of Iraqis, and also found the great majority of them were actually

pro-war, and looked forward to the day the U.S. chased Saddam from power.

That was a take on Iraq, though, that swam against the current of puffery. It was certainly not the message anyone was getting from the media in general. The referendum, however clumsy and over the top in its results, was a propaganda triumph. So was the broader effort to trade visas and access for timidity and press agency.

In the end, most news organizations, including *The New York Times*, ABC, and many others, pulled their correspondents out of Baghdad in the final days. They were understandably worried that their folks could be taken hostage, or suffer some worse Iraqi vengeance in the final days. Those who did stay in Baghdad, like Nic Robertson of CNN and Melinda Liu of *Newsweek*, are to be commended for their courage. And perhaps, once the shooting has ended, their long journalistic wait will be proven to have been worthwhile. ■

Nordland, a correspondent-at-large for Newsweek, has covered every U.S. military intervention since Grenada. He chose not to be "embedded" and covered Gulf War II from Kuwait and Iraq.

Dateline

By Christopher Dickey

"FIRE AND FORGET" IS A BIT OF military jargon that describes, say, an anti-tank missile that does the work of tracking and hitting the target once you pull the trigger. But it could just as aptly describe the way the U.S. makes war and the way the American press covers it.

Since 1981, Washington has carried out an act of war, on average, just about every year. But who really remembers the Gulf of Sidra, Grenada, Lebanon, Syria, Nicaragua's harbors, Libya, Iran's oil installations and Iran Air 655, Panama, Somalia, repeated attacks on Iraq after the first Gulf War—in 1993, 1996, 1998—Haiti, Sudan, Afghanistan, special ops in Bosnia, bombing Serbia and Kosovo, Afghanistan again, and several actions that I'm sure I've forgotten myself just now?

Unlike movie violence, the real stuff numbed people, bored them, and left them oddly complacent as we went into Gulf War II (actually Gulf War III, but who remembers?). The combat seemed somehow cost-free. There was a collective sense of resignation, a weird mixture of unreality and invincibility—a little like the way Arnold J. Toynbee once recalled the mood at the height of the British Empire. "Well," he wrote, "here we are at the top of the world and we have arrived at this peak to stay there—forever! There is, of course, a thing called history, but history is something unpleasant that happens to other people." Of course, that was before World Wars I and II.

You would have thought the September 11 terrorist attacks would have wiped out American complacency. Yet the Victorian imperiousness of a century ago had nothing on American obliviousness in March, 2003. Yes, even now. That's because what Americans really want from the rest of the world is the ability to forget about it—or, rather, to go back to forgetting about it. Any foreign correspondent knows that's true. Our fellow citizens are no longer imbued with missionary zeal, no longer seeking the next frontier. Sometime in the last century, the American way of life became less about pioneering than cocooning. And despite the present administration's rhetoric about spreading democracy, the



FIRE & FORGET



Americans, all too used to video-friendly war, will soon weary of Iraq. Unfortunately, those on the ground can't change the channel

**KABUL, 2002:
THERE'S NO
CLOSURE FOR
THOSE ON THE
RECEIVING END
OF WARFARE**



**KUWAIT, 2003: NO ONE WAS
QUITE READY FOR THE WAY THE
COVERAGE PLAYED OUT**

heart of its message has been quite different: not that we will change the world, but that, in the end, the world will not change us. This war, I fear, is different. It could change us and the world very much. Possibly, it has already.

None of us was quite ready for the way the fighting and the coverage played out over the first week of combat. We were not ready to be mesmerized by the tank-cams racing through the desert in southern Iraq, nor were we prepared to be quite so horrified by the first footage Baghdad showed of dead and captured American soldiers. Those of us who have covered wars for a long time have never,

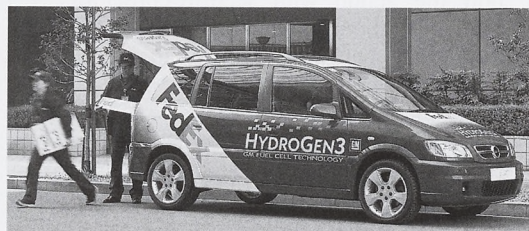
we realized, covered a war quite like this one. This was not the puny government forces and guerrilla armies of Central America and Africa, nor was it the massive frontal assault of the first Gulf War. Everything moved so fast. The front was so ill-defined. And the population so hostile. After three days, two journalists were dead, two were missing—and more journalist casualties were ahead, including Michael Kelly of *Atlantic Monthly* and David Bloom of NBC News. Many reporters came close to dying. Despite all the cautionary tales we told the world and ourselves, we had been seduced by the notion that the Iraqis would welcome the invasion as a liberation. They did not. We thought they would do what we remembered them doing in 1991, when they took the first

chance to rise up against Saddam. They did not. And not only because they faced ferocious repression if they did. But because they remembered the last war differently. The people on the ground always do. And sometimes even those of us who cover these wars do not.

OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES, THE Pentagon has developed techniques for deluging the press with official information—and limiting its access to anything else. It has gotten pretty good at it, too. So as a result, at least since Libya in 1986, America's little shoot-'em-ups have been covered as if they were sports events—our team, their team, we play, we win, we leave—or even video games. All that gun-camera footage shot from the cool distance of several thousand feet. Tar-

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gets disappearing in silent blazes of white light. And now we've added videophones, the technology that makes those tank-cams possible—heightening the vicarious thrill even more. Among gamers, those who play *Doom* or *Quake*, it's called a "first-person shooter."

For years, we in the press have played right along with this sort of video-friendly orchestration. It certainly is easier to take a feed than to dodge a bullet and, in many cases, the feed makes for better television. The result on the home front is a reassuring sense of excitement, even gratification, and, finally, of closure. When the feeds end, in essence, so does the war.

If you've been on the ground at the receiving end of those American bombs, however, among the people who won't forget, don't get closure, and can't just change the channel, you know that understanding their story can make the difference between a war that wins a peace and a war that is just a declared victory. And you know that much of the hatred toward the U.S. in the world comes not from those leaders who are jealous of its power, as some in Washington would

gets—the Iraqis themselves and people elsewhere in the Arab and Muslim world—labored under no such illusions. On the fourth day of the war, newspapers all over the Arab world ran a picture of a little boy with half his head blown away. A few hours later, Iraqi television broadcast the first footage of dead American soldiers and American POWs. Arab satellite television and European networks broadcast those images to all the world except the U.S., which saw more sanitized versions. While the embeds continued to report the action with security-conscious vagueness about where they were or exactly what they were doing, Iraqi television—amazingly—broadcast reasonably reliable information about where the front was and what casualties had been suffered by its side. While the U.S.-based media were taking the line from Doha and Washington that some U.S. soldiers might be missing, Iraqi television was showing the dead and the captured.

MEANWHILE, THE CHANCES FOR TRULY independent coverage of the conflict disappeared fast, though not for want of try-

dent Kurdish territories of northern Iraq.

Others went to Kuwait, where the U.S. military buildup was concentrated, with the aim of slipping around the Pentagon's pools and checkpoints when the shooting started. A few, mostly Europeans, set their sights on southern Iran, hoping to move across the frontier with Shiite rebels based there. And hundreds more descended on Jordan, which served as a not-so-secret base for thousands of American, British, and Australian special forces. For reporters in Jordan who could get across the border, it was a straight five-hour shot along the desert highway to the outskirts of Baghdad. But in the first days, at least, none was allowed by Jordan to go that way. Once the fighting started, even the journalistic platoons that deployed unilaterally from Kuwait found very quickly they were in over their heads and pulled back again.

Much—no, an enormous amount—will happen between the time this article goes to bed and the end of April, when it is read. One hopes, as an American, that victory will be ours. That the Iraqi people have waked to a new and optimistic

IN IRAQ, THE CHANCES for truly independent coverage disappeared fast

have us believe, but from those innocent people who've been the victims of its power, or fear that they might be.

In this Gulf War, the system of "embedding"—with reporters and camera people assigned to combat units all over the front—quickly gave American audiences the impression that they were seeing everything that happened on the battlefield. There was a steady flow of images and reporting about the American and British men and women who did the initial fighting. These combat units were in harm's way, but they sure looked hard to hit as the Pentagon put its full array of weaponry into action. The reporters were also better prepared than some of their predecessors in earlier pools. Ultimately, though, they depended on the guidance of—and were subject to the censorship, open or implied, of—the units with which they traveled. And the impression they gave, that viewers were getting a broad view of the war, was deeply misleading. That wasn't the whole mosaic we were seeing, but rather just an occasional mosaic tile here or there.

The target audience among the tar-

ing. Many news organizations looked for ways to get around the official version. Some journalists, despite dire warnings from the Pentagon, chose to stay in Baghdad to experience "shock and awe" firsthand. The plan was that once the fighting began and most communications were shut down, some footage and reporting would filter out, carried by taxi drivers if necessary, or perhaps even Bedouin smugglers. At least one U.S. network had such an arrangement in place since the end of last year. In the first days, at least, that wasn't necessary. Phones continued to work. But Iraqi secret police and security people were literally everywhere. Before CNN was kicked out of town, one agent slept in the CNN office.

There were also many independent journalists at work out there—called "unilaterals" by the U.S. military. Some of them had been trained in "hazardous environment courses," learning to dodge bullets if they could, and to treat the wounds if they couldn't. As early as December and January, international news organizations started filtering reporters and camera crews into the semi-independ-

dawn. That Saddam will be gone forever. But one thing is for sure. Someday soon, the White House will change the line of the day and start talking up the economy or some other threat somewhere else. Soon the presidential campaigns will be under way, demanding a different kind of reporting. Domestic priorities will return. Among news organizations, the budgets for comprehensive coverage of Iraq will be exhausted. So will the patience of the audience.

Even before the war started, people were so sick of Iraq news that the saga of a nightclub fire or a kidnapped teen wiped it off the screen. When the fighting is over and Baghdad once again comes on the screen, Americans will reach for their remotes. History will be something unpleasant that happened in another time to other people. And it will keep happening—until we in the press find ways to give the fight for peace the same importance as the game of war. ■

Dickey is Paris bureau chief and Middle East regional editor for Newsweek. When the war started, he was in Amman, Jordan.

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HATE THE WEST, HATE THE WESTERN MEDIA: LASHING OUT IN PAKISTAN

'AH, WALL STREET JOURNAL, THE ENEMY...'

Many in the Middle East are openly hostile toward the U.S. media—and those are the moderates who deign to speak to reporters

IN THE COURSE OF WRITING A

story last year on the Kuwaiti upbringing of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, I knocked on the door of a Pakistani-born imam who had preached for decades in the same gritty Kuwait City neighborhood where al Qaeda's recently captured No. 3 leader had grown up.

The imam was asleep in his home attached to the mosque, and had to be roused by a servant. Yet he was eager to talk—not to answer questions but to ask them of a correspondent for an American

newspaper. "Why are you slaughtering our women in Afghanistan?" he intoned, jabbing his index finger into my chest and raising his voice. "Why are you, every day, killing our children in Palestine? Why are you waging war on Islam?"

That's how it goes all too often in the Middle East these days. Many in the region refuse to recognize the difference between the American media and the American government—and reporters for U.S. publications, even those who aren't U.S. citizens, increasingly get an earful, as if they work directly for President George W. Bush. That's if we're speaking with rel-

By Yaroslav Trofimov

PHOTOGRAPH BY REUTERS NEWMEDIA INC./CORBIS

ative moderates: Many of the more radical Islamist leaders, including those who are involved in public life, serving in parliament, or holding other government jobs, simply refuse to talk to U.S. correspondents.

Abdullah Abdul Rahman, an Egyptian Islamic scholar and the son of "blind Sheikh" Omar Abdul Rahman, the man incarcerated in the U.S. for his role in the 1993 World Trade Center blast, only agreed to see me after my fixer pointed out that I hold Italian, rather than American, citizenship. And in one of my more bizarre interviews, a Saudi cleric declined to sully himself by talking to an unbeliever like me directly—and chose to answer questions only via a Muslim intermediary who was sitting next to me.

The Kuwaiti imam's assumption that

the kingdom as a Zionist plot. It even secured a condemnation of the "Western media slander campaign" against Saudi Arabia from fellow Persian Gulf monarchies. Since the Arab press, dominated by Saudi-funded conglomerates, focuses on the occasional anti-Muslim bigotry found on American op-ed pages, many in this region increasingly view the entire apparatus of American journalism as hopelessly prejudiced against Muslims and Arabs.

It's even more complex for those of us who work for publications with a conservative editorial line that usually backs the current U.S. administration—such as *The Wall Street Journal*. In a region where the concept of media independence from government is already difficult to explain, the idea that a paper's news coverage may not be influenced by the editorial line is posi-

and press card, a very efficient aide quickly set up a series of meetings with the militia's leaders and officials—all of whom showed up for appointments with Swiss precision. Such a change in attitude, of course, is in part because Hezbollah is now in the journalism business itself: Its al Manar satellite TV channel, beamed around the world, even sends reporters to press conferences organized by the American embassy in Beirut.

But Hezbollah is very much the exception. On one trip to Saudi Arabia, I spent several days trying to interview Sheikh Salman al Awda, a fiery preacher from the ultraconservative oasis of Buraida who led anti-government demonstrations before being jailed for five years in the early 1990s. Many at the time described Sheikh al Awda as "a Saudi Khomeini," and

Osama bin Laden quoted the sheikh's rulings in his own *fatwas*. Instead of meeting me in Buraida, north of Riyadh, Sheikh al Awda eventually set up the appointment in relatively cosmopolitan Jeddah, in a wealthy supporter's home just behind a huge Chuck E. Cheese fast-food outlet. But after making me fly all the way from Riyadh, the sheikh refused to talk on the record unless I agreed to publish everything he said without cutting a word, and without adding extraneous context—an obviously impossible condition if one is writing a newspaper article.

Still, he didn't want me to leave—and subjected me to a litany of questions that often started with "Why are you Americans...?" The conversation veered from al Qaeda to such

questions as why the West feels moral guilt for the Holocaust but not for slaughtering Muslims during the Crusades—a far more serious crime in the eyes of my hosts. The sheikh and his entourage made it quite clear that they really considered me a spy. It didn't help that the house's owner had just returned from a trip to Florida, where a woman he had struck up a conversation with in a shopping mall told him cheerfully: "Ah, you're from Saudi Arabia? My brother works there for the CIA." ■

Trofimov is a Rome-based staff correspondent for The Wall Street Journal covering the Mediterranean and the Middle East. He has reported from most Arab countries since Sept. 11, 2001.



THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS SWARMS A UNITED NATIONS-IRAQ PRESS EVENT IN BAGHDAD

all American reporters represent the U.S. government has played out for me several times. This is a dangerous blurring, and one that both the Islamic militants and some governments in the region—where the very concept of independent media is seen as extravagantly out of touch with reality—seek to perpetuate.

Osama bin Laden, in his latest speech, described America's "media machine" as a crucial tool of the "Crusader-Jewish alliance" that seeks to conquer the Islamic world. Saudi Arabia's government, meanwhile, has gone out of its way since Sept. 11, 2001, to portray any press criticism of

tively unfathomable. So, as a smiling Egyptian government press officer met me in his plush office before issuing accreditation last fall, he welcomed me with a half-joking, "Ah, *Wall Street Journal*, the enemy..." And in Saudi Arabia, a government official who had spent several years in the U.S. began the conversation with: "So, Mr. Trofimov, is it true that *The Wall Street Journal* is owned by the Jews?"

Ironically, a rare exception to the general hostility to U.S. reporters is Hezbollah—even though this Lebanese Shiite militia first gained prominence in the 1980s by killing American servicemen and kidnapping American correspondents. Now, the media-savvy group operates a full-fledged press center in south Beirut. There, after photocopying my passport



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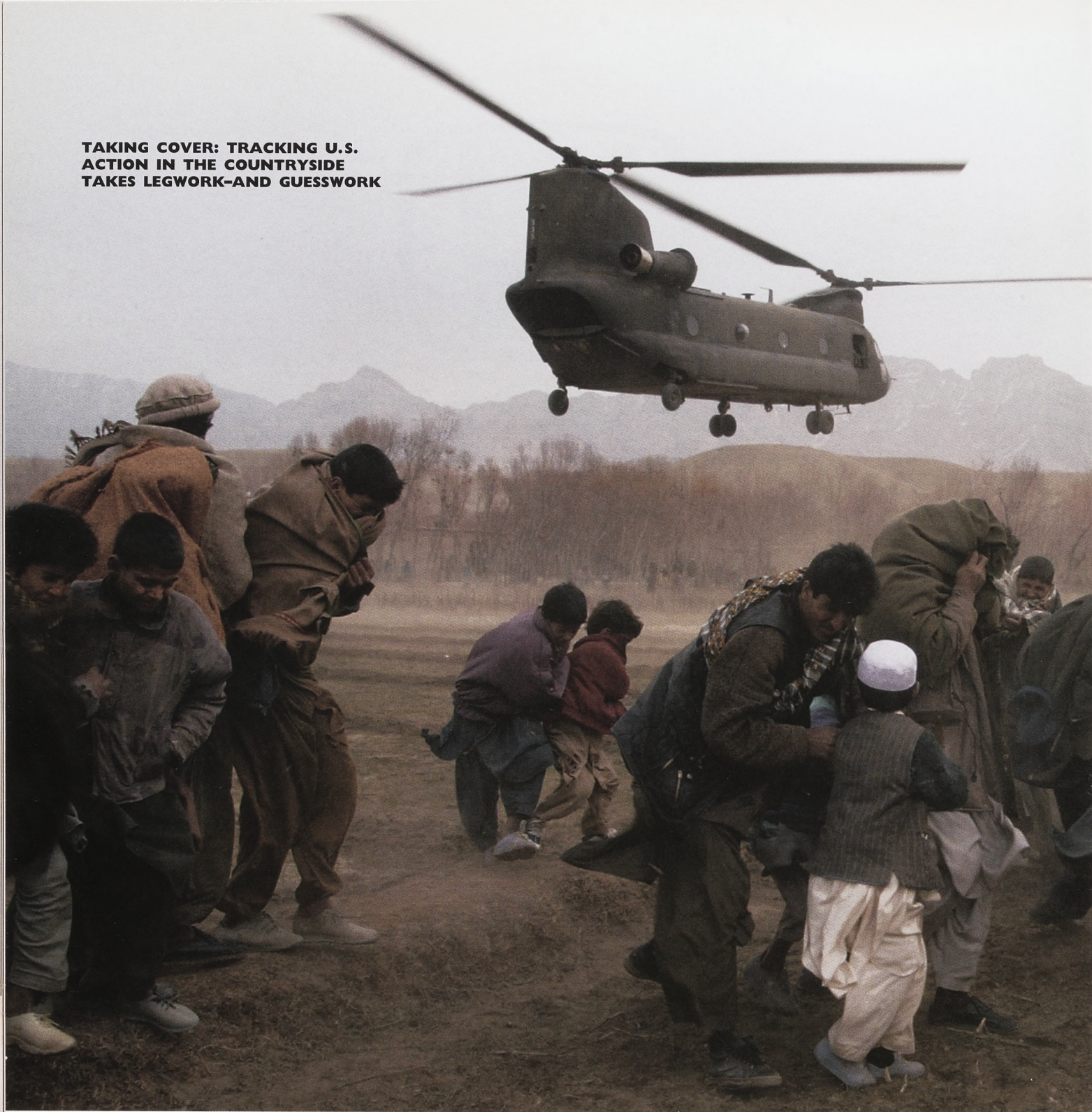
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**TAKING COVER: TRACKING U.S.
ACTION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
TAKES LEGWORK-AND GUESSWORK**



ALL TOO QUIET ON

By Liz Sly

THE DAYS IN KABUL START

slowly, if a little early. Around 4:30 a.m. comes the wailing call of the *muezzin* at the mosque down the road, summoning the faithful to prayer. For those of us infidels battling American deadlines and a 10-hour time difference, it's a call to roll over and catch a few more hours of sleep.

Then, around 6, comes the mooing of the cow that resides somewhere near the garden of my house. I have never seen the cow, and I don't know what it's doing in Wazir Akbar Khan, the smartest and most expensive of Kabul neighborhoods. Not long ago, this district of spacious villas, manicured lawns, pink geraniums—and hardly any bomb damage—housed senior members of the Taliban and al Qaeda. These days, it's affordable only to journalists, aid workers, and top government officials. I know only that on most days the cow and I do not keep the same hours; for me the sound is just another comforting reminder that there is still a little time to snuggle under the covers before taking on the challenges of another day in Kabul. These will typically include making sure the generator is working, piling wood into the stove to keep warm, and trying to persuade the shower to produce at least a trickle of water.

On those days when events make it necessary to talk to the U.S. military, though, the cow is a signal that it's time to wake up, jump into the car, and race across the Shomali plain to Bagram Air Base, the U.S. military headquarters, about an hour's drive north of Kabul. It's a pleasant enough journey. Leaving behind the bustling city, you pass through those quintessentially Afghan scenes of squashed, rusty Russian tanks fringed by snow-capped mountains. There is no time to stop and stare, however, because the military waits for no one, and the pickup time at the gate is 9 a.m. sharp. It used to be 7 a.m., then 8 a.m. This far more civi-

lized time reflects the reality that these days there is no news urgent enough to relay in time for American deadlines—and that no one would take notice if there were such news.

TO ENTER THE BASE IS TO STEP INTO A different world, one of rigid discipline, with rules and regulations that multiply with each passing month. Hulking soldiers with shorn heads, shaved chins, and body armor conduct a bewildering array of searches that can cause many unforeseen delays. In pursuit of the war against terrorism, there is a 15 mph speed limit—and there are squads of military police on hand to enforce it, even though it's almost impossible to go faster than 15 mph in the dust and mud. The police issue fines to anyone caught not wearing a seat belt, too, although why you need a seat belt if you're traveling at 15 mph is beyond me.

There are designated sidewalks, usually indistinguishable from the road, but you can get in trouble if you stray from them. There are places where journalists may walk and places where they may not, and the number of the latter has increased in proportion to the dwindling level of interest in the story. Basically, we are allowed to walk between the press tent and the toilets, but nowhere else. You can spend many agonizing hours under the scorching sun—or in the freezing cold—waiting for an escort to take you to where you need to go.

All this to attend the daily briefing, which these days usually lives up to its name by being brief. There might have been a rocket attack on U.S. forces here, a shootout there, perhaps an accident somewhere else. Places and times are given, but not much else. If U.S. forces have found weapons caches, there will be a detailed accounting of precisely how many, their size, origin, and make. If they have captured people, there will be no details, because the military has a policy



THE AFGHAN FRONT

Already, it's the forgotten war.

*So how do reporters remind Americans
that the fight is far from over?*



of not commenting on the numbers, identities, and sometimes even the existence, of those it detains. There are doubtless sound reasons for that. But it does make it rather difficult to keep track of the successes—or failures—of a mission whose primary goal, as the spokesmen frequently remind us, is to kill or capture members of al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Thankfully, however, we are not obliged to rely on the U.S. military for information or access. This is one of those wars in which journalists can move fairly freely between the two sides. You can

wait, probably indefinitely, for your requests to visit U.S. forces in the field to be granted. It is more fruitful, however, to jump in the car and head south, to the Pashtun tribal belt and the front line of the war on terror.

It's not a pleasant journey. The distances aren't so great, but the roads are appalling and it can take hours of spine-shattering misery to cover just a few miles. Once you arrive, however, there are no rules or regulations or timetables to observe. You can drop in any time on an array of tribesmen, warlords, and local offi-

cials who will happily ply you with tea and tales of how the Americans are working with the wrong people, acting on the wrong information, going after the wrong targets, and generally not doing any of the things these tribesmen would do if they were asked—and doubtless paid—to help in hunting down al Qaeda. They are a mine of information also about the latest sightings of al Qaeda fighters, Taliban remnants, and sometimes even Osama bin Laden himself.

How much of it is to be believed? Somewhere between the fragmented facts

IN THIS WAR, journalists can move fairly freely between the two sides

provided by the military and the voluble outpourings of the Afghans, lies the truth about a military operation that hasn't yet succeeded in its stated mission—the capture of bin Laden and the routing of his al Qaeda organization.

Putting the pieces together sometimes requires a lot of legwork, and a lot of guesswork. That was brought home to me last summer while reporting what should have been a relatively easy story that ended up consuming far more time than it probably was worth. The story concerned an alleged helicopter raid on a home in a hamlet near the notoriously pro-Taliban town of Zormat, a 3½-hour drive from Kabul. U.S. forces flew in, stormed a house, detained five people and, according to reports from the area, killed a civilian. War-on-terror HQ in Tampa, Fla., swiftly denied the report. There had been no such operation, and no helicopters had been in the air at the time, a spokesperson said.

Although it hardly seemed a major incident, the reports, as well as the denial, seemed pretty specific. So I headed out to the area, accompanied by the *Chicago Tribune's* awesomely capable translator, Farouk Samim, to try to figure out what was going on. Along the way, various local people told us the same story of hearing the clatter of helicopters, and then the sound of explosions as the helicopters shot up the compound—a traditional Pashtun home of several buildings surrounded by high mud walls and housing several branches of an extended family.

WHEN WE REACHED THE COMPOUND, THE evidence that helicopters had indeed been involved in an attack there seemed laughably obvious. Immediately adjacent to the compound was a rice paddy in which, imprinted in the shallow mud, was the unmistakable outline of helicopter skids—with American-size boot prints leading away from it. There was other evidence, too, such as pieces of shrapnel bearing U.S. military markings whose location coincided with the fresh indentations of explosions in the compound walls.

We were warmly welcomed by the head of the household, Haji Uddin, who had apparently been the target of the raid

but who had inexplicably been absent at the time. After spending several hours in the house, inspecting the damage and interviewing many of the 40-odd women and children who had been there at the time—only five males had been present, and they had all been detained—there seemed little doubt that this was a case of mistaken identity or false intelligence, and that an innocent Afghan family had been unnecessarily subjected to a horrific raid.


We also found a grieving widow living nearby with several newly orphaned children. The civilian who died was an unlucky neighboring farmer who had been sleeping outdoors that night and got hit by a stray bullet during the onslaught. It looked as if the raiding soldiers, in the darkness, couldn't possibly have known that they had inadvertently killed someone. But why deny that the raid had happened?

There were only two details that didn't add up. The women said they couldn't be sure that the men who raided the house were Americans because they didn't say a word throughout the entire operation. And although the soldiers didn't look like Afghans, they had stolen the best turbans in the house, which made the women think they may have been Afghans, perhaps from a different part of the country, because as far as they knew, Americans don't wear turbans.

A trip to Bagram was required.

There, confronted with the evidence, U.S. officials swiftly acknowledged that the raid had indeed taken place, that all the soldiers involved had been Americans, and that muddle, not malice, had prompted the denial. It was a Special Forces operation, and Special Forces often don't share details of their activities, even with the rest of the military, let alone the media. I was assured, however, that there was no question of mistaken identity and that the owner of the house was definitely suspected of links to al Qaeda. I never got an answer on the turbans.

A few days later, two members of the Uddin family turned up at my house in Kabul, bringing news that American forces had returned to the area, this time in daylight, and had somewhat more politely called on the house next door to the



**ON THE PROWL: A U.S. SOLDIER
WITH A METAL DETECTOR
SEARCHES A HOUSE IN A VILLAGE
SUSPECTED TO HARBOR TALIBAN
AND AL QAEDA FIGHTERS**



INFORMATION, PLEASE: THE AUTHOR GETS WHAT SHE CAN FROM AMERICAN SOLDIERS

one that had been raided, looking for the owner. That man, they said, was a senior member of the Taliban. A few days before the raid on Haji Uddin's home, a visitor had warned the Taliban official that he should leave because U.S. forces were on his trail. He had promptly disappeared.

Samim and I returned to the village. Many residents told us that the missing man was indeed a member of the Taliban, his house looked an awful lot like the Uddin one, and it was right next door. (His children said he had gone to Pakistan.) It was starting to look as though the mistaken identity story was on again, and that U.S. forces had hit the wrong house, if not the wrong man. But then, just as we were leaving, a local guide casually mentioned that Haji Uddin was known to have hosted al Qaeda members at his home, and, moreover, had let them sleep with his wives and daughters in return for money—a scandalous charge in Afghan society, and one that would lead to much bloodshed if widely repeated.

In the end, none of the information added up to anything conclusive, apart from a confused tangle of supposition, rumor, and unanswered questions that pointed up both the difficulty of reporting the war and of prosecuting it. Was Haji Uddin an al Qaeda pimp? Did American forces pick out the wrong house in the darkness? Are they really stealing Afghan turbans? Does it matter?

It matters to the extent that it is clear there is much about this war that we don't know, aren't told, and may never

find out. Although this isn't the first war in which the U.S. has tightly controlled access to information, it is the first in which the role of Special Forces has dominated so overwhelmingly. They conduct most of the operations, and they operate beyond the writ of the conventional media structures established by the Pentagon. When the official spokespeople deny that an operation has taken place, they are speaking only on behalf of conventional forces, and conventional forces have played a very limited role in the Afghan war. Sometimes, though not always, they try to make that clear. But it makes it difficult to believe anything you are told, by anyone. This incident came to light because it took place relatively close to Kabul. Most of the war is being fought hundreds of miles from Kabul, in areas that can only be reached on foot or by helicopter, and we simply don't know.

IN ANY CASE, ALL THAT TOOK PLACE LAST summer, when the level of interest was still high. Now, with so much attention fixed on that other war, it is hard to generate much enthusiasm for the often obscure details of the one that is still under way in Afghanistan. It isn't only the fault of Iraq, or of fickle news editors, that Afghanistan has fallen off the map. The story has settled into a routine that defies easy conclusions or analysis—more than anything, it's a story about what isn't happening. U.S. forces haven't found bin Laden. They haven't driven out the Taliban or al Qaeda. And they haven't pacified the country. On the other hand, while the Taliban and al Qaeda forces are regrouping, they have been doing that since Day One—and they haven't yet

managed to regroup in such a way as to pose a real challenge to America's presence.

The president, Hamid Karzai, hasn't been assassinated, although there is an ever-present danger that he might be. There hasn't been a coup or a massive terrorist attack or a major political upheaval, although there are enough conspiracy theories and political intrigues to sustain the expectation that any of these things could happen. The aid effort hasn't been big enough or swift enough to make a real difference in the lamentable living conditions of most Afghans, and whether it ever will is now in doubt.

But I do sometimes wonder whether we in the media don't share some responsibility for allowing attention to wander from this still critical conflict. I certainly wouldn't criticize any of my colleagues in the Kabul press corps. They have done a valiant job in difficult circumstances of seeking out ways to keep the story alive and of tracking its twists and trends. The core problems have been well documented: the intelligence failures, the unreliability of local allies, the mistaken bombings, and the complexities of local tribal intrigue. But as the months drag by without significant new developments, it becomes harder to find ways of reminding people that the Afghan war isn't over yet—or, just as important, explaining why it isn't over.

Better access to U.S. troops, and to action on the front line, would surely help bring the story alive for American readers. The chief military spokesman, Colonel Roger King, always finds the time to sit down and talk about what is going on, but it isn't the same as hearing it from those who are actually out there. Access has slowly improved over the months, and I gather that it was significantly better earlier this year. The *Chicago Tribune's* Vanessa Gezari secured a three-day "embed" with U.S. forces at short notice in February, and filed an excellent story detailing how, once again, in the latest encounter with a concentration of Taliban forces holed up in the mountains, the enemy had managed to slip away.

I fear, however, that it may already be too late. Just as the war with Iraq was about to get under way, there was a flurry of stories and editorials in U.S. newspapers under headlines such as "Don't Forget Afghanistan." It's a sure sign that Afghanistan already has been forgotten. ■

Sly, the South Asia correspondent for the Chicago Tribune, has covered Afghanistan on a regular basis since November, 2001.

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By Vernon Silver

In tracking Mideast terror funds, little is what it seems

BOMBERS' BANKERS

MOHAMMED SARSOUR IS CONDUCTING A TOUR OF

Al-Aqsa Islamic Bank, the institution he runs near Ramallah on the West Bank. As he leads a visitor through the corridors, he jokes darkly about his employees' duties. He points to one staffer and says, "This is the guy who processes the payments to Hamas." He indicates an office and deadpans, "Here is where we launder money."

He can only laugh, he says, because it's so plainly untrue. But is it? The U.S. government says Sarsour runs his bank on behalf of Hamas, the militant Palestinian group. Sarsour, a U.S. citizen, says he has no links to the group that frequently claims responsibility for suicide bombings in Israel.

For reporters trying to untangle the truth about who finances terrorism, sorting facts from fiction and propaganda can be an arduous task. Does the unprepossessing Al-Aqsa manager—with his American accent and bald eagle statue in his living room—really belong on a list of terror financiers? Or could U.S. intelligence be wrong? In my first chat with Sarsour a year ago, by telephone, his position is straightforward enough: "There is no connection between us and Hamas," he says. But I learn later that one's interpretation of his statement depends on what Sarsour's definition of "is" is.

Meeting with Sarsour at his West Bank office and home in July, 2002, his story takes on more texture. The Al-Aqsa manager, pressed on the Hamas allegation, admits that, yes, several years ago the company that established his bank made a \$60,000 contribution to a charity that helped the families of suicide bombers. But the company no longer makes such contributions, he says. Anyhow, he adds, "it's a small amount. How much terror can you do with that?"

In the opaque world of Middle East finance, the truth is often elusive. In covering that world for *Bloomberg Markets* magazine, questions of terror funding and sanctions-busting arise in almost every story, whether it's about Yassir Arafat's investments, Iraq's bankers, Saudi billionaires' holdings, Lebanese politics, or Pakistani charities. The first hurdle is one of definitions, as

OCTOBER, 2002, SUICIDE BOMB ATTACK THAT KILLED EIGHT IN NORTHERN ISRAEL: JUST WHERE DO THE PALESTINIAN MILITANTS GET THEIR MONEY?

there are many views of what constitutes terrorism. Among Muslims, for instance, Hamas and Hezbollah, the Lebanon-based Shiite counterpart to Hamas, are widely seen as mostly social service organizations that happen to have paramilitary wings. But even when there is agreement on definitions, the second hurdle is a thicket of traditions, loyalties, and intertwined investments. Maybe that's why the U.S. list of terrorism supporters has been so fungible, with groups and people dropped from the list over the past year—and their assets unfrozen—for lack of conclusive evidence.

As a journalist, it has been a challenge to find evidence to back the claims of both the accused and the accusers. Certainly that was the case when I did a story on Saddam Hussein's banking network.

I STARTED MY REPORTING BY CALLING around the Middle East to branches of Iraq's state-owned Rafidain Bank, identifying myself as a reporter for Bloomberg News. Surprisingly, the dictator's bankers

January. The branch occupied the second floor of a concrete office building, above an Internet café on six-lane Tahrir Street a few blocks from the west bank of the Nile. The beige wall-to-wall carpet was stained with paint. Doors lay on the floor, off their hinges. No customers lined up at the teller windows, which stood as reminders of a busier time—before Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, which triggered U.N. financial sanctions that bar most international payments to Iraqi companies, the Iraqi government, or anyone in Iraq. This sure didn't look like a center for sanctions-busting money transfers.

Ahmed greeted me in his windowless office, where portraits of Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak hung above his glass-topped desk. To the side was a poster with Hussein's face superimposed on an image of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.

Ahmed, a burly man with a salt-and-pepper mustache, started by asking what sort of company wanted to move money to Baghdad, and how much. It was then

was hiding something, it turned out he could have been telling the truth both on the phone and in person. Other bankers told me that Rafidain Bank itself might not be moving the money, but could be using accounts it controls at other banks to move money for it. Both statements could be true: Yes, the Iraqi bankers were moving money. And yes, technically, they didn't move the money.

I HAD A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE WITH AL-AQSA Islamic Bank, which I had first heard about in January, 2001. News reports, including one in *The New York Times*, said Hamas supporters in the U.S. had used Al-Aqsa as a conduit to transfer funds from Citibank to Hamas militants. After those reports, Citi stopped its transactions with Al-Aqsa. Then, in the massive search for terrorist bank accounts after Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. Treasury Dept. publicly identified the Palestinian bank as a launderer of terror funds. On Dec. 4, 2001, the U.S. ordered a freeze on the assets of Al-Aqsa Islamic Bank in the U.S. "A ma-

YES, THE IRAQI BANKERS were moving money. And yes, technically, they weren't

candidly told me they offered money transfers to and from Baghdad—surprising, given that their financial system is supposed to be largely frozen by U.N. sanctions. It turned out Iraq was running a global banking network, anchored by Rafidain, that could move money all over the world—flouting sanctions and allowing Saddam to buy weapons. Israeli army intelligence said Iraq used Rafidain Bank to pay families of Palestinian suicide bombers, too.

After establishing with my phone calls and other reporting what Rafidain Bank was apparently doing, I telephoned the bank's Cairo branch, again identifying myself in Arabic as a reporter. If I wanted to send money to Iraq, said a man who identified himself as Mohammed, "you can transfer the money from our office here to Baghdad, and your correspondent there can pick it up at Rafidain Bank." Given the sanctions, how can this be done? I asked. "It's according to our ways," he said.

Later I called the manager of the Cairo branch, Suhail Abood Ahmed, and he told me that he could transfer funds from Cairo to Baghdad, but would only give details if I visited his branch for an interview. I paid a visit on a morning in

that I reminded him that I was a reporter and explained that I was working on an article about the operations of the Iraqi banking system. He quickly changed course. "The U.N. prevents any money to reach Baghdad," he said, adding that the Egyptian government has frozen Rafidain's accounts to comply with sanctions. "For this reason, it's not possible to transfer money to or from Baghdad."

Suddenly the power went out, a frequent occurrence in Cairo. From behind the glow of his Rothmans cigarette, Ahmed said no money had moved from Cairo to Baghdad since the Persian Gulf War because Egypt blocked its accounts.

When had he been telling me the truth—on the phone or in his office? When the power returned, his secretary delivered a 4-inch-high pile of papers. If the Egyptians had frozen his bank's money, what were the papers for? "It's paper, not money," he said, the records of frozen accounts. If all accounts are frozen, what does he do all day? "I sit and look at the clock, and at 2:30, I go home," he said. Before getting up to see a visitor in another room, Ahmed locked some papers in a drawer and destroyed the rest with a shredder.

While it certainly looked like Ahmed

majority of its shareholders and senior officials have ties to Hamas," says a White House fact sheet published at the time. The asset freeze was one of many announced that day; another target was the U.S.-based Holy Land Foundation for Relief & Development, which got all the attention in the next day's newspapers. Al-Aqsa, seven time zones ahead of Washington, got scant mention. By the time Sarsour got to work the next day, few reporters were pounding at his door.

I, too, moved on to other things until a few weeks later. While looking for new names in the hunt for terror money, I remembered Al-Aqsa. If the majority of shareholders have ties to Hamas, as the Administration in Washington charged, I figured we should find out who they are. I phoned Al-Aqsa's headquarters, and Sarsour told me the bank had no link to Hamas. And how about the shareholders? A majority, he said, were Saudi businessmen, and he gave me their names.

My probe showed that through various direct and indirect holdings, Saudis owned about 52% of Al-Aqsa. If the White House intelligence was correct, that might mean the U.S. had information on Saudi support of Hamas. So I called the Saudi investors, including Awni Shaker, who



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**CNN Salutes the Winners of the
Overseas Press Club of America Annual Awards.**



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*Based on Pew Research national opinion survey, The Pew Research Center for People and the Press, August 4, 2002 (N=1002) among 13 broadcast and cable entities and 9 print entities.



ARMY DAY IN IRAQ: THE U.N. SANCTIONS DIDN'T KEEP SADDAM FROM BUYING WEAPONS

owns the Saudi Pizza Hut and Popeye's Chicken & Biscuits franchises—plus 10% of Al-Aqsa. "You can't have an American franchise and support terrorism," said Awni's son, Bashar Shaker. In fact, sales had been hurt by a boycott of American chains meant to pressure the U.S. to curb support of Israel, he said. I asked the folks at Treasury if they were sure about the majority of shareholders being Hamas supporters, and they said they couldn't comment beyond the press releases.

Seven months later in the West Bank, as I made the rounds of Palestinian Authority finance offices for a story on Arafat's money, I recalled an offer from Sarsour. To prove that he had no link to Hamas, he said, "I'm ready to sit down with the FBI, the CIA, the local sheriff." Or even a journalist. I took him up on it, arriving one morning at Al-Aqsa's main office, a five-minute drive from Arafat's half-flattened Ramallah headquarters. With most cities in the West Bank under a sporadic curfew, and the bank often closed, a line of customers eager to withdraw cash had formed by the teller counter. Behind

the counter a brass sign in Arabic script spanned the length of the lobby, bearing the Koranic verse that some Muslims interpret as forbidding the payment or collection of interest. Al-Aqsa adheres to that interpretation, which is why it calls itself an Islamic bank.

On the third floor, Sarsour greeted me in his office, which is decorated with etchings of scenes of Jerusalem's old city, including one of the *minbar*, or pulpit, of Al-Aqsa mosque, one of the holiest sites in Islam. On his desk he keeps a collection of spent shell casings found in and around the bank. As he took me around, joking about his department for Hamas financing, we walked past floor-to-ceiling photo-murals of Al-Aqsa and the next-door Dome of the Rock.

After touring the bank, Sarsour, 56, drove me in his Audi sedan across Ramallah to his modern stone house surrounded by olive trees. A West Bank native, Sarsour lived in the U.S. for 25 years and worked for the government in Washington. His children attend the Ramallah Quaker Friends Schools, and he says he wants peace with Israel. That afternoon, the Israeli army lifted its curfew, which allowed Sarsour to sit with me on a side porch where a teenage daughter in blue

jeans served lemonade made from the fruit of a lemon tree in his backyard.

Sarsour said the U.S. won't tell him why they call Al-Aqsa an arm of Hamas, even though he has asked for a detailed bill of indictment so he can refute it. Didn't he at least have a hunch why his bank had been singled out? Eventually, he disclosed the \$60,000 donation. Many Islamic companies give a portion of their profits as *zakat*, or charity, each year, he explained. In 1996, Beit El-Mal Holdings Co.—which helped form Al-Aqsa in 1999 and still owns 20% of it—let independent board members decide how to give *zakat*, Sarsour said. Some of the money went to groups not vetted by Beit El-Mal's managers, and those groups might have given aid to families of bombers, he said.

As Sarsour's wife put a lunch of stuffed zucchini and grape leaves on the table, an Israeli loudspeaker downtown announced that the curfew was being reimposed. To underscore the point, soldiers started exploding percussion grenades. Lunch ended. Getting to the bottom of terror financing hadn't. ■

Silver, a 2001 OPC award winner, covers Middle East finance from Rome for Bloomberg Markets magazine.



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THE OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB OF AMERICA ANNUAL AWARDS

By William J. Holstein, John Corporon and Cait Murphy, Awards Committee Co-Chairs

Terrorism and the war in Afghanistan dominated the competition—but they were hardly the only subjects of note

FOR A SECOND YEAR, THE COMBINATION OF THE WAR against terror and deepening conflict in the Middle East dominated the Overseas Press Club Awards competition. • The OPC received 449 entries. More than 70 judges, serving on a total of 21 judging panels, spent many hours picking the winners. About half the winning entries centered on Afghanistan, terrorism, or the Mideast conflict. What continued to impress our judges was the ability of correspondents to place themselves where the action was, often at great personal risk. • But other winners represented a surprising, and pleasing, variety. Two winners focused on the continued agonies of the African continent, which in years past has dominated our competition. Pakistan,

China, Vietnam, and India were the scenes of award-winning coverage. Latin America was represented with a winning entry from Honduras. And on the business and environmental front, winners wrote about the offshore tax-avoidance moves of American companies and the challenges of disposing of discarded personal computers. • Missing from the winners' circle were entries from Europe, South America, Japan, and the Korean peninsula—areas that, with the exception of Korea, commanded less editorial attention. • Our thanks to the judges and to the sponsors who support the OPC awards. Together we are defending and promoting the highest ideals of international journalism in a time of great challenge.



A SCENE IN THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY



THE ROBERT CAPA GOLD MEDAL

CAROYLN COLE

LOS ANGELES TIMES STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER COLE WAS OUTSIDE THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY IN BETHLEHEM ON MAY 2, 2002—FIVE WEEKS INTO THE STANDOFF THERE BETWEEN ISRAELI SOLDIERS AND PALESTINIAN MILITANTS—WHEN 10 AID WORKERS RACED INTO THE CHURCH. COLE WENT WITH THEM, STAYED FOR NINE DAYS—AND TOOK THESE STUNNING, EXCLUSIVE SHOTS



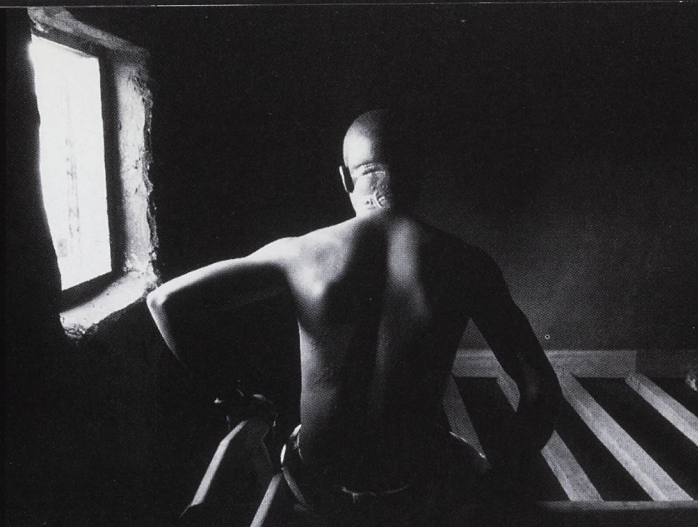


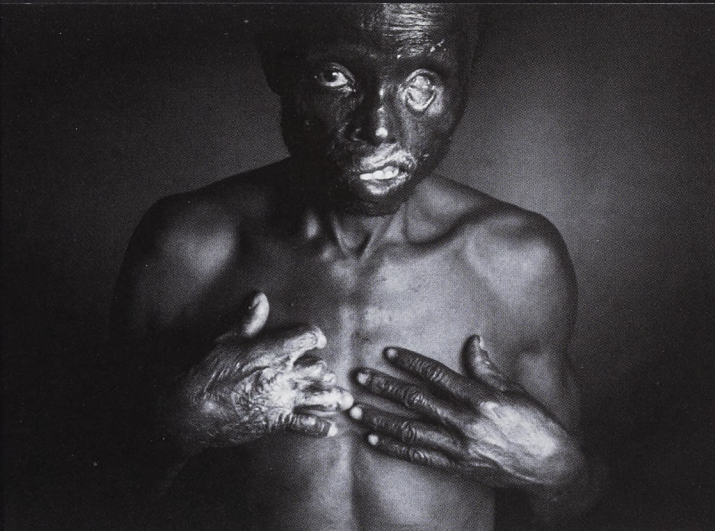
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: GREEK ORTHODOX PRIESTS
BLESS THE CHURCH; MUSLIMS, FACING MECCA, KNEEL
IN PRAYER; A PALESTINIAN POLICEMAN EATS GREENS
PICKED IN A COURTYARD; FRIENDS COMFORT A DYING
PALESTINIAN, SHOT BY AN AUTOMATED ISRAELI SNIPER
CRANE; AS FIRST LIGHT ENTERS THE 4TH CENTURY
CHURCH, ONE PALESTINIAN CARRIES A CUP OF HOT TEA

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

JOHN KAPLAN

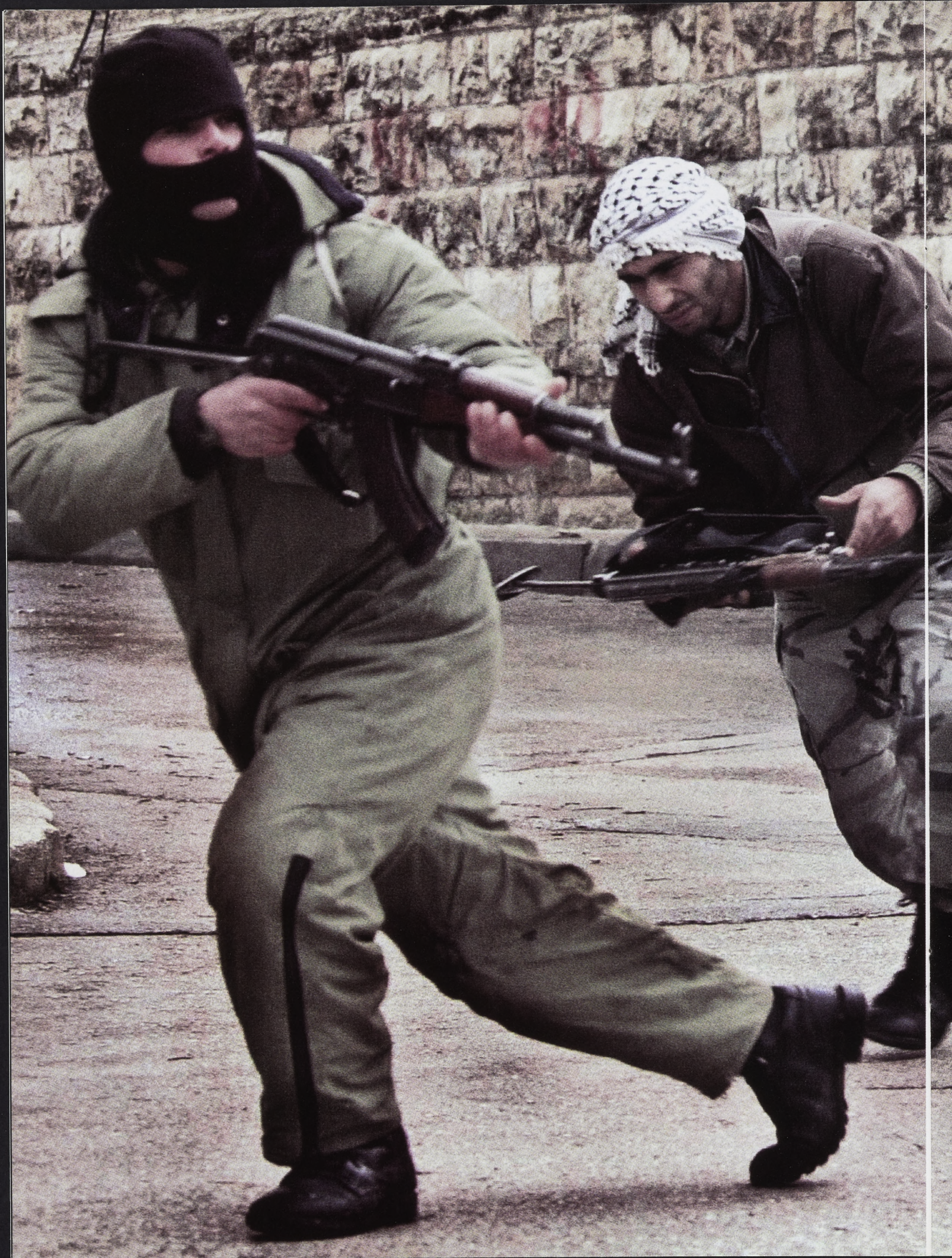
KAPLAN, A PRIZE-WINNING PHOTOGRAPHER AND UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA JOURNALISM PROFESSOR, TOOK THESE WRENCHING SHOTS OF SIERRA LEONE REFUGEES FOR A PHOTO ESSAY CALLED "TRANSCENDING TORTURE" THAT APPEARED IN *THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES* IN MARCH, 2002. BY THEN, SOME REFUGEES FROM THE DECADE-LONG CIVIL WAR—MANY OF THEM CHILDREN MAIMED AND WOMEN RAPED BY REBELS—WERE BEGINNING TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES, WHILE THOUSAND OF OTHERS REMAINED IN MAKESHIFT CAMPS ACROSS THE BORDER IN GUINEA





CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: A MUTE, DESTITUTE WOMAN WHO ONCE RAN A TRADE BUSINESS; A BOY WHO SURVIVED A REBEL ATTACK ON HIS VILLAGE, ROAMING THE BUSH FOR 25 DAYS BEFORE REACHING GUINEA; A ONETIME GARDENER, SLASHED BY REBEL MACHETES AND LEFT TO DIE IN 1993; A FORMER FARMER, HORRIBLY DISFIGURED IN 1991 AFTER TEENAGE REBELS PUSHED HIS HEAD INTO BOILING WATER







THE JOHN FABER AWARD

ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP PHOTOGRAPHERS CAPTURED THE STRUGGLE IN THE WEST BANK AS ISRAELI TROOPS RAIDED RAMALLAH IN RESPONSE TO PALESTINIAN TERROR ATTACKS IN MARCH, 2002. CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: AN ISRAELI COUPLE'S BEDROOM AFTER AN ATTACK BY PALESTINIAN GUNMEN THAT KILLED ONE SETTLER; A MOURNER CLOSES THE EYES OF A PALESTINIAN POLICEMAN KILLED BY ISRAELI TROOPS IN RAMALLAH; A PALESTINIAN (RIGHT) IS FATALLY SHOT DURING FIGHTING IN RAMALLAH





THE OLIVIER REBBOT AWARD

SIMON NORFOLK

BRITISH PHOTOGRAPHER NORFOLK CAPTURED THESE DEVASTATING IMAGES IN AND AROUND WAR-STRICKEN KABUL ON A TRIP TO AFGHANISTAN IN NOVEMBER, 2001. USING AN ANTIQUATED, LARGE-FORMAT FIELD CAMERA, HE WAS ABLE TO PRODUCE PIN-SHARP 4-BY-5-INCH NEGATIVES OF RUINED AIRPORTS, COLLAPSED BUILDINGS, AND OTHER DESTRUCTION. THIS GALLERY, TITLED "WHAT'S LEFT," APPEARED IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES* MAGAZINE ON JANUARY 6, 2002



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A BOMB-CLEARING OPERATION IN THE WAKE OF A U.S. CLUSTER-BOMB ATTACK ON A VILLAGE OUTSIDE KABUL; A VENDOR PASSES THROUGH WHAT REMAINS OF THE FAIRGROUNDS IN EAST KABUL; "TV MOUNTAIN" AFTER A U.S. AIRSTRIKE SILENCED THE TALIBAN'S VOICE OF SHARIAH BROADCASTS; DETRITUS AT THE LONG-UNUSED KABUL AIRPORT, ONCE POUNDED BY SOVIET MIGS AND LATER HIT BY U.S. BOMBERS



1. THE HAL BOYLE AWARD

Best newspaper or wire service reporting from abroad

ALAN CULLISON, ANDREW HIGGINS, KARB Y LEGGETT

The Wall Street Journal

"Inside al Qaeda"

The remarkable series of articles demonstrates the best of what journalism should be: enterprising reporting, penetrating analysis, and great storytelling. The reporters traveled around the world to pursue every possible lead in portraying the most in-depth picture to date of the inner workings of al Qaeda. In doing so, they broke new ground on the biggest story of the year: al Qaeda and the terrorist network.

CITATIONS:

Sean D. Naylor

Army Times

"Operation Anaconda"

Philip P. Pan

The Washington Post

"Inside the World of Work in China"

Scott Peterson

The Christian Science Monitor

"Northern Iraq"

2. THE BOB CONSIDINE AWARD

Best newspaper or wire service interpretation of international affairs

LOS ANGELES TIMES STAFF

"The Untold War"

With brave reporting and stellar writing, this series told the behind-the-scenes story of the Afghan war in military, cultural, and human terms. Excellent graphics and photos enhanced the presentation, especially in explaining military strategies employed by the U.S.

Los Angeles Times

CITATION:

Andres Oppenheimer

The Miami Herald

"Latin American Change"



CULLISON



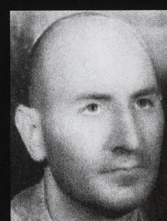
HIGGINS



LEGGETT



COLE



NORFOLK

3. THE ROBERT CAPA GOLD MEDAL

Best published photographic reporting from abroad requiring exceptional courage and enterprise

CAROLYN COLE

Los Angeles Times

"Church of the Nativity: In the Center of the Siege"

Exceptional courage and enterprise is exactly what it took for Carolyn Cole to go into the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and to document the last nine days of the siege. In a hostile setting, with little food, water, or proper equipment, she was able to show the desperate situation – and to compose beautiful images, bathed in warm golden light,

CITATION:

Paolo Pellegrin

Magnum for The New York Times Magazine

"An Impossible Occupation"

4. THE OLIVIER REBBOT AWARD

Best photographic reporting from abroad in magazines and books

SIMON NORFOLK

Growbag for The New York Times Magazine

"What's Left of Kabul"

To document Kabul after the fall of the Taliban, Norfolk treated the city as an archeological project, as if studying the remains of an ancient civilization. Looking at the skeleton of a once-thriving place, one sees an eerily quiet beauty in these pictures. This approach to picturing the aftermath of war was innovative and highly effective.

CITATIONS:

James Nachtwey

VII for *Time* magazine/time.com

"Afghanistan After the Taliban"

Ilkka Uimonen

Newsweek

"Kashmir"

5. THE JOHN FABER AWARD

Best photographic reporting from abroad in newspapers and wire services

ASSOCIATED PRESS STAFF

Jerome Delay, Elizabeth Dalziel, David Guttenfelder, Eitan Hess-Ashkenazi, Nasser Nasser, John McConnico, Lefteris Pitarakis
"Mideast Turmoil"

The continuing tragedy of the Middle East is captured in these powerful images by the Associated Press staff photographers. These disturbing and explicit pictures show the violence that is a fact of everyday life on both sides of the struggle.

CITATION:

Pedro Ugarte
Agence France Presse
"Goma Erupts"

6. FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

Best feature photography published in any medium on an international theme

JOHN KAPLAN

Aurora / St. Petersburg Times
"Transcending Torture"

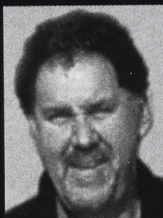
The civil wars in Sierre Leone and Liberia have resulted in thousands of maimed and scarred victims of torture. Each story is one of brutality. In spite of the horror of what these people have endured, Kaplan's pictures pay tribute to these people and the resilience of the human spirit.

CITATION:

Alexandra Boulat
VII for *Time Magazine* / time.com
"Afghanistan Today"



KAPLAN



SHUSTER



ROBERTSON

7. THE LOWELL THOMAS AWARD

Best radio news or interpretation of international affairs

MIKE SHUSTER

National Public Radio

"The Middle East: A Century of Conflict"

An excellent multipart detailed series on the Middle East. A complex topic presented with brilliant texture and historical perspective.

8. THE DAVID KAPLAN AWARD

Best TV spot news reporting from abroad

NIC ROBERTSON

CNN

"Terror on Tape"

Using sources and contacts developed after years of reporting in Afghanistan, CNN's Nic Robertson unearthed a trove of al Qaeda training tapes that showed in detail how recruits were schooled in assassinations, kidnappings, airplane hijackings, explosives, and germ warfare. The convincing detail, including a video of Osama bin Laden with his forces that became a story in itself. Anti-terrorism experts said the discovery provided valuable insight into the inner workings of al Qaeda.

CITATION:

Dan Rather, Peter Bluff, Sally Garner, Sean Bean, Jim Murphy
CBS Evening News
"Mideast Madness: Dan Rather's Interview with Ariel Sharon"

9. THE EDWARD R. MURROW AWARD

*Best TV interpretation or documentary
on international affairs*

**PAUL YULE, SUSANNAH SHIPMAN,
ROY ACKERMAN, JENNIFER HYDE**
CNN Productions

"House of War: The Uprising at
Mazar-e Sharif"

Under extremely dangerous conditions, the CNN crew delivered a gripping report on an epic battle during the war in Afghanistan when Taliban prisoners staged a bloody uprising at Mazar-e Sharif. This daring account of the ensuing battle is an example of courageous reporting and powerful storytelling.

CITATION:

**Paul Mitchell, Tania Rakhmanova,
Stephen Segaller**
Thirteen / WNET New York
and Wilton Films
"Greetings from Grozny"

10. THE ED CUNNINGHAM AWARD

Best magazine reporting from abroad

LAWRENCE WRIGHT

The New Yorker

"The Man Behind bin Laden"

A superb, fluidly detailed portrait of Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, al Qaeda's strategic mastermind. The piece showed remarkable breadth of reporting and context, and was filled with hard-to-get interviews and rich contextual detail.

CITATIONS:

Jeffrey Goldberg

The New Yorker

"In the Party of God"

Peter Landesman

The New York Times Magazine

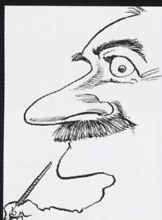
"The Light at the End of the Chunnel"



YULE



WRIGHT



KALLAUGHER



BEHAR



LUX

11. THE THOMAS NAST AWARD

Best cartoons on international affairs

KEVIN (KAL) KALLAUGHER

The Baltimore Sun

Kevin Kallaugh combines an elegant hand with a searing wit. Whether he's showing George Bush teaching Tony Blair how to act like a gun-sliding cowboy, or lampooning Robert Mugabe's version of one-man, one-vote, it's hard to believe that anyone could have done it better than KAL. This year, no one did.

CITATION:

Stuart Carlson

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

12. THE MORTON FRANK AWARD

*Best business reporting from abroad
in magazines*

RICHARD BEHAR

Fortune

"Kidnapped Nation"

This is an enthralling and exhaustive look at the problems in Pakistan following 9/11, complete with dramatic writing and concise insights. It is also an example of superb reporting on the front line of terrorism financing.

HAL LUX

Institutional Investor

"Nationalities of Convenience"

Dug from the dim recesses of tax law and bolstered by determined reporting and writing, this story had real impact. Congress and the rest of the media jumped on the issue, forcing several companies to abandon their plans to move their U.S. headquarters overseas to avoid taxes.

CITATION:

Benjamin Fulford

Forbes Global

"Hold the Presses"

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support the efforts of the
Overseas Press Club and
in these uncertain times
applauds those who
endure hardships to
report the truth.**



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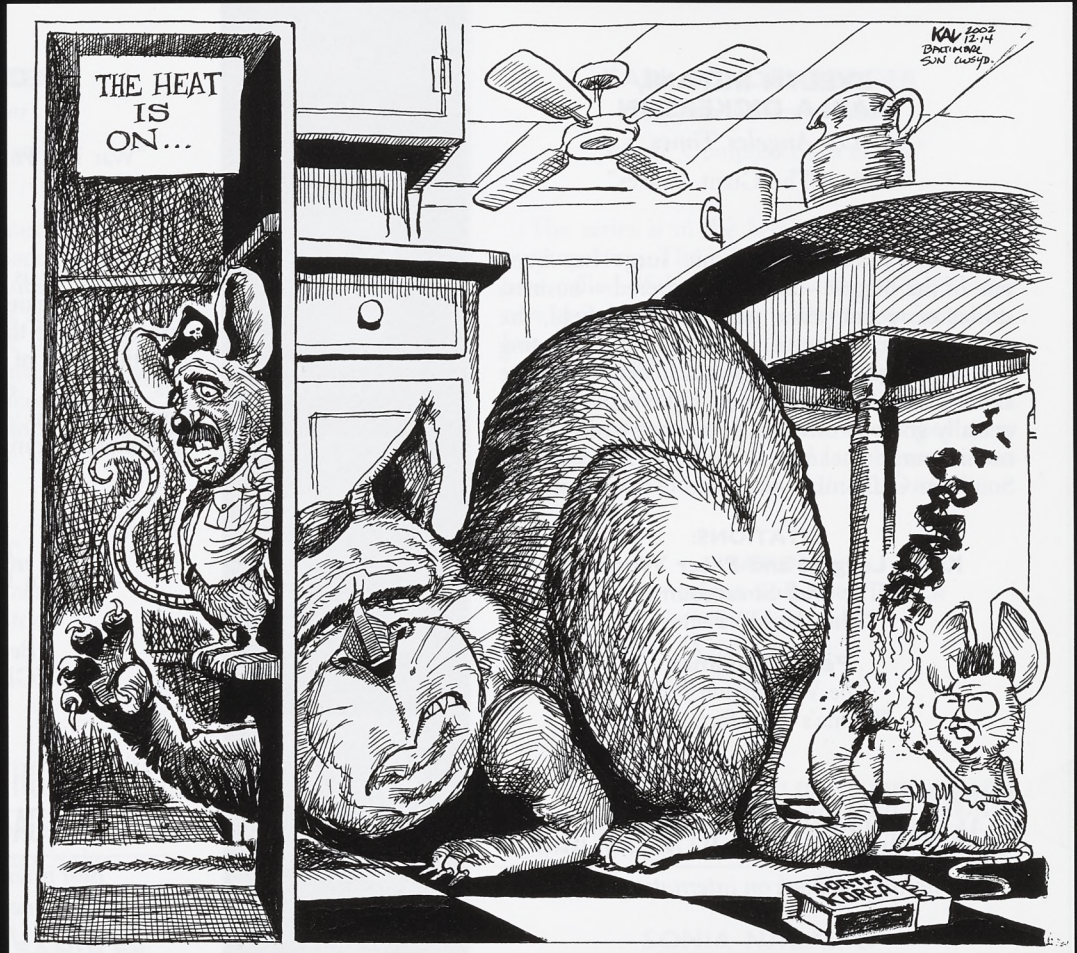
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BEST CARTOONS ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

KEVIN KALLAUGHER



CITATION

STUART CARLSON



13. THE MALCOLM FORBES AWARD

Best business reporting from abroad in newspapers or wire services

**EVELYN IRITANI,
MARLA DICKERSON**

Los Angeles Times

"China: The Giant Awakes"

China's stunning economic surge has been one of the biggest – and most covered – business stories of recent years. In a crowded field, the energy, perceptiveness, wide-ranging reporting and lively writing of Iritani and Dickerson in the *Los Angeles Times* stood out. The series was especially good in driving home what China's economic surge means to the paper's readers in Southern California and to the U.S. economy.

CITATIONS:

Karby Leggett and Peter Wonacott

The Wall Street Journal

"The World's Factory"

Peter Goodman

The Washington Post

"China's Transformation"

14. THE CORNELIUS RYAN AWARD

Best nonfiction book on international affairs

JOHN LAURENCE

PublicAffairs

"The Cat from Hué: A Vietnam War Story"

The Vietnam conflict still casts its shadow over the nation. John Laurence, widely judged by his colleagues to be the best television correspondent of that era, explores those shadows in this expansive, richly anecdotal and troubling memoir of the years he spent in country. The shell-shattered ruins of Hué, the terror of a lieutenant colonel in an outpost under NVN fire, a ghostly conversation with the grunts who picked up the bodies – all these cinematic moments come alive through Laurence's rich prose. Along the way he details the true cost of war to Vietnam, America, and the men and women who got the story.

CITATION:

Mary Anne Weaver

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

"Pakistan: In the Shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan"



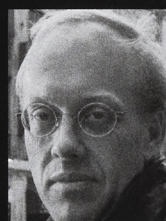
IRITANI



DICKERSON



LAURENCE



HEDGES



KOPPEL

15. THE MADELINE DANE ROSS AWARD

Best international reporting in the print medium showing a concern for the human condition

CHRIS HEDGES

PublicAffairs

"War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning"

This book is at once an intelligent, ethical and heartbreaking portrait of war, and a probing exploration of the role of the press in perpetuating the myth of war. "War Is a Force that Gives Us Meaning" encompasses Hedges' 15 years' experience as a foreign correspondent with breathtaking range and clarity.

CITATIONS:

Paula Bock

The Seattle Times

"In Her Mother's Shoes"

Bill Toland

Beaver County Times

"Ghosts of Chernobyl"

16. THE CARL SPIELVOGEL AWARD

Best international reporting in the broadcast media showing a concern for the human condition

**TED KOPPEL, MARTIN SEEMUNGAL,
TOM BETTAG, JAMES BLUE,
ELISSA RUBIN**

ABC News - Nightline

"Heart of Darkness"

Ted Koppel turns a spotlight on the Congo in what he calls "a story of murder, greed, violence, the quest for human power, and ultimately, the strength of the human spirit" in the continuing battle for the natural resources of the Congo.

17. THE JOE & LAURIE DINE AWARD

Best international reporting in a print medium dealing with human rights

JEFFREY GOLDBERG

The New Yorker

"The Great Terror"

In this exposé of the crimes of the Iraqi regime, Goldberg described Saddam Hussein's horrifying gas attacks against Kurdish villages, investigated ties between Iraq and al Qaeda terrorists, and explored the scope of Iraq's chemical weapons arsenal. Goldberg spent six months on this assignment, often from places that were off limits to western journalists. A former CIA director, James Woolsey, called the story "a blockbuster."

CITATION:

Rachel L. Swarns

The New York Times

"The New South Africa"



GOLDBERG



HANSEN



SANDLER



SCHOENBERGER



NAZARIO

18. THE ERIC & AMY BURGER AWARD

Best international reporting in the broadcast media dealing with human rights

**CHRIS HANSEN, TIM SANDLER,
DAVID CORVO, ALLAN MARAYNES,
BRUCE BURGER, MITCHELL
WAGENBERG, NILAM AGRAWAL,
LIZ BROWN**

NBC News - Dateline

"Slaves to Fashion?"

A comprehensive exposé of child slavery across India's silk industry. Dateline's yearlong investigation shows the harsh lives of very young children sold by their parents into "bonded labor." The documentary follows the silk production and supply chain from silkworm markets, to boiling and weaving sweatshops, through auction centers, fabric manufacturers, and the middlemen and suppliers to leading U.S. department stores. The documentary spotlights how difficult it is to say with any certainty whether the silk so widely available in America is – or is not – produced by child slaves.

19. THE WHITMAN BASSOW AWARD

Best reporting in any medium on international environmental issues

KARL SCHOENBERGER

San Jose Mercury News

"Where Computers Go to Die"

The series is in the best tradition of investigative reporting. The articles, part of a regular feature called "Silicon Valley's Dark Side," break new ground by exposing a story not reported before. The research took Schoenberger to Guiyu in southern China, where he and photographer Joanne Hoyoung Lee were able to see firsthand where computers are born and where they go to die, and the far-reaching and largely unseen environmental consequences of this "e-waste."

CITATION:

Fen Montaigne and Peter Essick

National Geographic

"Water Pressure"

20. THE ROBERT SPIERS BENJAMIN AWARD

Best reporting in any medium on Latin America

SONIA NAZARIO

Los Angeles Times

"The Boy Left Behind"

Sonia Nazario's series on a Honduran boy's epic struggle to find his estranged mother in the U.S. was an easy choice for the jury. In simple and beautiful prose, Ms. Nazario piled intimate detail upon detail to weave a compelling human narrative. Nazario's on-the-scene reporting demanded courage and enterprise. In an exceptional gesture for a newspaper, the *Times* printed her extensive footnotes to document the story.

CITATION:

Mary Jordan and Kevin Sullivan

The Washington Post

"Mexico: Outside the Law"

21. THE ARTYOM BOROVIK AWARD

For outstanding reporting by a Russian journalist who displays courage, insight, balanced yet aggressive reporting, and independence of thought

MIKHAIL KRIKUNENKO
NTV

"Merchants of Death"

The war in Chechnya is rife with bitter ironies, but nothing rankles the Russian public more than the thought that almost all of the Russian soldiers killed in the region are felled by Russian-made weapons. This concise, compelling documentary explores the murky world of gun enthusiasts, corrupt soldiers, and cash-hungry ordinary citizens who feed the enormous black market for weapons inside Russia.

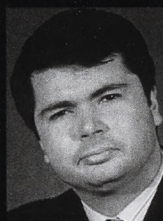
CITATION:

Serguey Dedukh and Anton Peredelsky
NTV

"Interview with Chechen Commando Baraev at the Moscow Theater Siege"

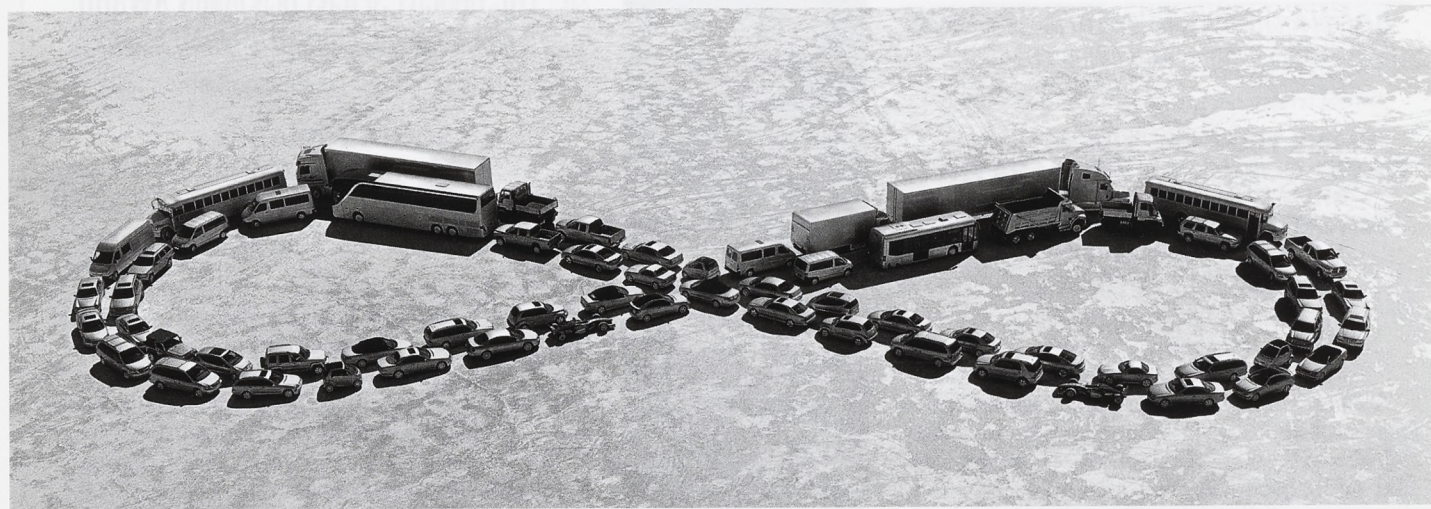


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ISRAEL REACTED WITH RELIEF

when the U.S. captured air bases in western Iraq that had been used to launch Scud missiles against the Jewish state in Gulf War I. That meant the chances of Israel coming under attack appeared to diminish dramatically. But just to keep on the safe side, a week after the war in Iraq began Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said the public should continue to keep their gas masks close at hand. But few Israelis heeded his words — most left their gas masks at home.

One neighbor of mine joked that the village we live in on the western outskirts of Jerusalem, just off the main highway to Tel Aviv, was now safe, as its most famous

The country has made huge economic gains—all of them checked by political turmoil

By Neal Sandler

resident was no longer Defense Minister. Yitzhak Mordechai, who lives just down the block, served in that post under former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In 1991, a suburb of Tel Aviv where then-Defense Minister Moshe Arens lives was hit by an Iraqi Scud.

The good news from Iraq meant that, in the medium term, attention might return to the Mideast's most enduring source of conflict—the Israel-Palestinian fight—and perhaps the U.S. would take a more active mediation role. President George W. Bush himself and his closest ally, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, indicated as much at their March 26 rendezvous. But although the disappearance

ISRAEL: HOW HIGH?



**ARRESTING A PALESTINIAN IN
HEBRON: THE INTIFADA HAS
BEEN BAD FOR BUSINESS**

PHOTOGRAPH BY NAYEF HASHLAMOUN / REUTERS

EXCHANGING DOLLARS IN TEL
AVIV: INFLATION, ONCE OUT OF
CONTROL, HAS BEEN TAMED



of the threat of direct involvement in the war with Iraq steadied nerves in Israel, the war only made a bad economic situation worse.

The Israeli economy is witnessing its worst recession ever. As late as 2000, the Jewish state had become a high-tech proving ground, and a dozen of its companies were considered among the most promising on the planet. Companies like Check Point Software and Comverse Technologies were among the fastest-growing in the world and looked as if they had nowhere to go but up. Israeli commerce with the world increased dramatically. The economy grew by 7.4% in 2000, driven largely by the high-tech boom.

Hundreds of startup companies were set up and Israel was dubbed the Silicon Wadi. But two years later the economy's seven-year-long boom fell victim to the violence between the Israelis and the Palestinians and the global economic slowdown. The Israeli economy has contracted for two years in a row and is expected to have another year of negative growth in 2003. High-tech exports, which rose by a remarkable 47% in 2000, have dropped for the past two years. Tourism has dried up almost completely.

Covering the Israeli economy has been

a roller-coaster ride. Back in 1977, when I began working in the field, there were few foreign reporters concentrating on the local economy. It was deemed insignificant, and largely state-controlled to boot. The Israeli economy was probably best known abroad for products like Jaffa oranges, diamonds, Gottex bathing suits, and Uzi submachine guns. Nowadays, computer chips and software account for 50% of Israeli exports.

There was a large contingent of foreign reporters on the scene in the late '70s, but the focus was on the bigger picture—namely, the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although that remains largely true to this day, there is a growing understanding that economic and political events are closely intertwined. This became abundantly clear to me only weeks after starting to work in Israel. The historic visit by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in November, 1977, brought about a brief upturn in the economies of both countries. The first cracks in the Arab boycott of Israel began to appear. But the process was short-lived.

I recall writing dozens of stories about the benefits of peace to the two former enemies. The atmosphere on the first El Al flight to Cairo was electric, and Israeli officials played up the prospects that

peace would have on the economic development of Egypt and Israel. But the realities of the Middle East quickly overtook the best intentions of both sides. The 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, until then a close ally of Israel, radicalized the region. Two years later, Sadat himself was gunned down by an assassin. Little remained of the grandiose economic schemes that were the focus of many an article at the time. The sole economic benefits were the tens of thousands of Israeli tourists who headed for Egypt and the Egyptian oil that headed in the opposite direction.

In 1982 Israel embarked on a war against Lebanon. Israel at the time was divided over the necessity of invading its northern neighbor. Then-Defense Minister Ariel Sharon promised his countrymen that the war would bring about a new order in Lebanon. To someone covering the region for over two decades, Sharon's words have a chilling similarity to those of George Bush, who is embarking on a war against Iraq to create a more democratic Middle East. Ironically, the two main protagonists in the region, Sharon, now Israel's Prime Minister, and Yassir Arafat, the leader of the Palestinians, are still at loggerheads.

I remember driving a small rented Italian car, weaving between military vehicles and streams of refugees on the main highway into Beirut. The Lebanese capital was a divided city. Part of the time I spent with soldiers on the hilltops overlooking the city watching the siege of the former Paris of the East. But much of the reporting came from contacts with the locals. It was clear that dozens of factions in the country were vying for control, and it quickly became apparent to me that Israel's Lebanese adventure was taking its toll both politically and economically.

The Lebanese quagmire coincided with and contributed to Israel's dire economic straits in the early '80s. Israel was facing triple-digit inflation and a runaway budget deficit, a crisis that finally came to a head in 1985. The tough-minded, often arrogant Finance Minister, Yitzhak Moda, impressed me in numerous interviews that he was going to carry through with his plans to set Israel on a new economic course. His emergency stabilization plan succeeded in turning the economy around. Inflation was brought under control, and Israel subsequently embarked on

a much-needed process of liberalization of the largely state-controlled economy.

Probably the most dramatic change in the Israeli economy came in the '90s. The massive immigration from the former Soviet Union and the first peace agreement with the Palestinians, and later with Jordan, opened the economy to an unprecedented period of growth. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants poured into the Jewish state. Many of them were highly qualified but initially were forced to take on menial jobs. Later, they became integral players in the workforce. The local economy was transformed into a high-tech powerhouse. A homegrown Israeli venture-capital industry invested billions of dollars in startup companies. Several, such as Check Point, Amdocs, and Comverse, became the new titans of the local economy. One got the sense during meetings with whiz kids like Check Point founder Gil Shwed that they were on to something big. Not yet in his mid-30s, he is now one of Israel's richest people. Shwed and others became folk heroes in the Israeli press. The country's sole economic daily, *Globes*, and the economic

pages of the regular Hebrew press were filled with tales of Israeli startups' latest acquisitions. The foreign press, which had for decades given only minor attention to the economy, began watching the local business scene. Suddenly, I wasn't the only one following the economic story.

The combination of a boom and the peace process turned Israeli stocks into hot commodities, and foreign multinationals, which had for years shunned Israel, were suddenly showing up. A story I wrote on a process developed by an immigrant scientist for extracting magnesium from the Dead Sea led to a huge investment by Volkswagen. But for Israel, it seems the more things change the more they remain the same. The Israeli economy's rapid expansion suddenly blew a tire when the tech boom abruptly ended at the end of 2000 and the new *intifada* broke out. The boom-and-bust cycle that has plagued the region will no doubt continue to be driven by the tumultuous events of the Middle East, which unfortunately never seem to end. ■

Sandler reports from Israel for BusinessWeek.

Johnson & Johnson

By Michael Moran

HIS MOUTH MOVED, THE SOUND OF HIS VOICE registered in my head, yet his meaning escaped me, so unbelievable did it seem. "The Internet version of a story is not an acceptable source for the BBC," my news director was saying. "Unless you see the paper version of *The New York Times*, you cannot do the spot. It must be a proper newspaper."

The year was 1994, and I made my living then as the BBC's U.S. affairs analyst. Each morning for two years, before making my own calls to sources, I had scanned the U.S. media then available to a London-based journalist—the *International Herald-Tribune*, the European edition of *The Wall Street Journal*, three-day-old copies of *The New York Times*—with an eye toward filling holes in the BBC's news reports.

My inadvertent discovery of the entire contents of each day's *New York Times* on this thing called the Internet prompted the BBC to issue the "proper newspaper" dictum. It would take months for the Beeb's news managers to grasp the tool suddenly at their fingertips. At an hour that found the staffs of the BBC's Washington and New York bureaus fast asleep, London could read the most important newspaper in the U.S.

The extent to which this upset apple carts cannot be overstated. In the few weeks preceding the Internet ban, my hard-working U.S.-based colleagues had time and again been rudely awakened at 3 a.m. Eastern time by London producers wanting them to hunt down guests or comment on short radio spots I had recorded in London, sourcing *The New York Times*. These were stories, of course, that the BBC's Washington bureau had not yet read. Centuries of tradition suddenly fell by the wayside. No longer would the Washington bureau chiefs decide whether to tell their editors in London about the trickily sourced *Times* off-lede on Bosnia. Now, it was available for London to see just after midnight Eastern time, in glowing digital 1s and 0s. The cat was out of the bag. "Evelyn Waugh is rolling in his grave," joked the World Service Washington correspondent of the day, Claire Bolderson, when we finally had our fence-mending conversation a few weeks later. "But I suppose we can't pretend it doesn't exist."

Around the planet, journalists based overseas soon would find themselves in similar positions—as resented catalysts, like myself, or reluctant converts, like Claire. Today, of course, the BBC runs one of the world's top Web sites, a portal that brings a combination of immediacy, depth, background, and multi-



THE 24/7 CORRES



SURFING IN RIYADH: IT WASN'T ALWAYS CLEAR THE NET WOULD BE A WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON

PONDENT

The Internet puts heavy demands on journalists overseas—but it makes the potential impact of their work far greater

media unmatched by any other medium. But in the fall of 1994, my discovery of the Internet as a way to keep up with the New York Yankees and friends at home had placed me in the middle of a standoff between two tremendous forces. One, British conservatism, had asserted its right to stop the planet spinning, at least temporarily, so that tradition and prerogatives would not be disturbed. The second, American technology, had upended time-worn rituals and, I knew, would ultimately prevail. Life in Washington, Johannesburg, Tokyo, and countless other far-flung bureaus has never been the same.

The Iraq war will push the marriage of journalist and technology to a new level. Where once we correspondents disappeared from our employers' radar when the shooting started, at least for a while, today MSNBC.com's correspondent in northern Iraq has wireless Internet access and multiple ways to file video, still photos, and text. Other technologies have kept pace, too. Cell phones purchased in Britain generally work in Kurdish-controlled Iraq. Satellite dishes and satellite phones, including phones that can transmit video, now are standard equipment.

Even since the beginning of the conflict in Afghanistan, technology has been put in place that will enable some journalists to get a jump on their rivals, and avoid being dependent on the communications infrastructures of national governments or the U.S. military. In Afghanistan, it took a crew of two engineers, a producer, and a correspondent to set up

the 550-pound dishes that fed video reports to the U.S.—dishes that required heavy generators in trucks. Now, NBC crews have dishes developed jointly with Raytheon that weigh only 140 pounds and can run off the cigarette lighter on most cars. As video is uploaded from the field, a producer using the same connection can surf major news sites to be sure his team is aware of the larger context of the story and key decisions taken by editors back home. They also can log in to the database of satellite imagery that NBC and other major outlets assembled in anticipation of the war. That gives them recent, tremendously detailed views of remote places and secret facilities that field correspondents may well encounter while reporting the story. All of these images, formerly the preserve of national intelligence and military agencies, are now publicly available for a price from providers like teraserver.com, digitalglobe.com, and others.

FATHOMING THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE AS journalists have come to rely on technology like the Net is like trying to judge the historical significance of Sept. 11, 2001, on U.S. foreign policy. Clearly, the evidence of change is before us every day. No significant news publication on the planet that I know of has failed to take advantage of the Net as a distribution medium. The change is so far-reaching that it is now possible for the enterprising journalist to read news and commentary—in English—from any country in the world on the day it is published without leaving his bedroom. Take a moment some time to look at www.onlinenewspapers.com. The scope of the material avail-

able is astounding.

The Internet's use as a reporting tool, too, has changed the dynamics of journalism. Leaving aside more complicated concepts like digging into public records on the Web, a reporter who types the name of an official about to be interviewed into the search engine Google will almost certainly have at least one more intelligent question to ask. Most governments vomit information onto the Web, and even after Washington pruned some of the most interesting sites after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the amount of material online from U.S. government sources like the Pentagon, the General Accounting Office, and the State Dept. is staggering.

Remember the days when you had to find an embassy flak to help you find out the name of the ambassador to Angola? Or an NSA source for a peek at the latest satellite intelligence on North Korea? Frustrated by your graphics department's inability to put maps on your stories that actually help the reader understand? Find one online, and e-mail it right to them. (They may still screw it up, but you now have something to assail them with.)

BY 1996, I HAD DECIDED TO TAKE THE great leap forward. At the BBC, it had dawned on me that any organization—local newspaper, weekly magazine, even personal Web site—had the potential for a global audience. Armed, dangerously, with this information, I returned to the U.S. to join the newly minted MSNBC.com (the Microsoft-affiliated Internet partner of NBC's MSNBC cable news channel) as foreign editor. Much of my first year there involved internal diplomacy, convincing NBC's seasoned foreign correspondents, veterans like Jim Mace-da, Martin Fletcher, and Ron Allen, that their own thirst for millions of viewers suddenly had grown a new intake valve.

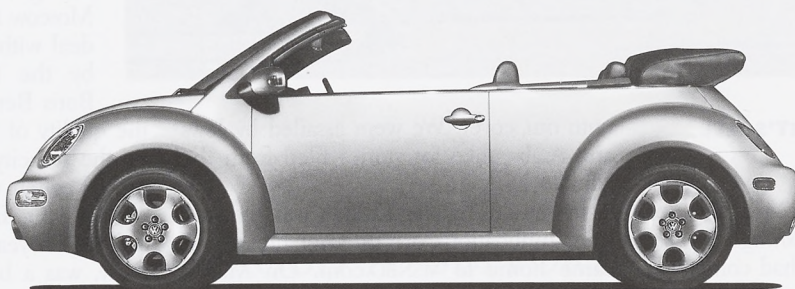
Early efforts in Chechnya, for instance, began to show the network how money spent "protectively"—to be ready in case something big happened—could bear fruit on a daily basis. NBC crews out of London labored in Chechnya bravely during the mid- and late '90s, but found it hard to make air. As a result, Rob Reynolds, then NBC News Moscow correspondent, became one of MSNBC.com's most prolific contributors, and two of his producers, Preston Mendenhall and Ursula Owre-Masterson, ultimately joined MSNBC.com's international desk.

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AFGHANISTAN: TECHNOLOGY USED BY THE MEDIA IN THAT WAR IS ALREADY OUTMODED



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KUWAIT: THESE DAYS IT'S ALL WAR, ALL THE TIME

nalism and some smart partnerships (*Newsweek* and *The Washington Post* among them), MSNBC.com had content to match the better U.S. newspapers, plus video reports, wire feeds, and interactive graphics that no paper could touch. The audience, at home and overseas, followed. Today's average daily number of "unique users" visiting MSNBC.com is 4.5 million. Measured monthly, some 30 million people log in.

EARLY ON, IT BECAME APPARENT THAT foreign governments were among our most voracious new readers. Time and again, as NBC correspondents filed reports from places like Chechnya, Beijing, or Cuba, the foreign ministries involved would respond—often via e-mail—taking issue with one point or another. Sometimes, this took place within hours of the story's publication. In Moscow, after MSNBC.com organized an Internet "chat" with President Boris Yeltsin in 1997, NBC bureau staff in Moscow reported that, on calls to the Kremlin, officials who had only a sketchy knowledge of NBC News quickly warmed to requests when they realized NBC was one of the parent's of MSNBC.com. "The Kremlin loved the chat, even though someone actually asked Yeltsin if he was a drunk during it," says Mendenhall. "It gave the bureau an 'in.'"

In another early example, Turkish police visited the home of one of Microsoft's regional representatives after a map of "Historic Kurdistan" appeared on an MSNBC story. (Microsoft, with NBC News, is a 50% partner in MSNBC). We soon found our site blocked by Chinese authorities and targeted by protesters who "hacked" an anti-globalization statement

onto our cover. We were assailed by Jews and Arabs alike for stories filed from the Middle East.

It was during the Kosovo war that the true implications of "Internet blowback" came home to MSNBC.com. On March 24, 1999, just as the first bombs fell on Belgrade, MSNBC.com correspondent Mendenhall called to let me know he had been arrested moments earlier by Serbian Interior Ministry police. From the back of a police van, he told me they were taking him to a police station in central Belgrade—hardly the place, we both knew, to be as the F-117s and Tomahawk missiles bore down. It emerged that Mendenhall had been arrested because of a map of downtown Belgrade that appeared on MSNBC.com—a map Serbian intelligence decided he must have helped supply. (In fact, it was drawn from other sources by our design department.) Having survived his night in the pokey, Mendenhall was driven to the Hungarian border and expelled.

"The good old days are over," veteran *New York Times* Balkans correspondent David Binder told me when I related the story. "It used to be some guy in their embassy in Washington would sort through clips and, maybe, he might report something back to Belgrade for follow-up. Now, it's instantaneous."

But it wasn't always clear that the Net would be a worldwide phenomenon. In 1997, I managed to wangle an invitation to an "Internet news summit" between Russian and American journalists in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg, just east of the Urals, sponsored by the Center for Civil Society International. For three days in January, we held court at Urals State University, showing off our latest wares. Finally, one editor from the frozen town of Nickelsk stood up and said, "I admire

what you are doing. But do you realize we run out of coal, and sometimes even food, during the winter?" On our last day there, we visited the region's largest newspaper, *Uralskaya Rabochie*, and an editor there listened politely as one of the Americans prattled on about how his newspaper could make use of the Internet. "I am sorry," he said. "Perhaps you don't understand that you are in Russia. Here, what you hope for simply isn't possible."

Happily, the *Uralskaya* editor was wrong. Within a year, I was back in Moscow to discuss a new distribution deal with a Russian Web site owned by the then-high-flying "oligarch" Boris Berezhevsky. I was stunned by the quality of their work, and particularly by the ferocity with which they covered the Chechen war. While this would soon change, the fact is that Russia's media, only a few years freed of the Communist Party, was a battleground of ideas, some of them outrageous, some of them bootlicking, but most of them online.

Since the dot-com bubble burst, the venture capitalists have largely left journalism alone. By and large, Internet news sites today labor on without anyone retaining much hope that they will actually make a profit. For the correspondent in the field, this is not the main concern. Often over the years, I found foreign correspondents receptive to the idea of a new vehicle for their reporting, but fearful that the Internet's "global reach" mantra would be used to justify closing down bureaus. I do not believe that has been the case. Indeed, if anything, the voracious appetite of MSNBC.com has kept NBC correspondents in places like Asia and Latin America busy when the network's interest has been focused elsewhere.

But I do concede that the jury is out. Is the advent of the Internet a sea change liberating foreign correspondents to do things we would never have imagined before? Or, as some would have it, do these developments merely represent the latest deterioration of culture and craft, a new sign of the coming apocalypse of news values and traditions? It really is up to us to answer those questions. ■

MSNBC.com Senior Producer Moran has led international coverage at the Web site since 1996. At the BBC from 1993-96, he covered U.S. foreign policy, the war in Bosnia, and U.S. involvement in Northern Ireland. From 1990-93, he reported on the fall of communism in Eastern Europe for Radio Free Europe and various British and American newspapers.

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**RAMALLAH:
ISRAELI TROOPS
USE STUN
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KEEP THE
MEDIA AT BAY**

The Shifting Sands of Middle East Press Freedom

By Minky Worden

BY SOME RECKONINGS, THERE WAS modest progress in the global battle for press freedom in 2002. For one thing, the death toll was down: In the conservative count of the Committee to Protect Journalists, 19 were killed for doing their jobs, vs. 24 in 2001. But there was bad news, too. Five journalists who were “disappeared” are still missing, more than 100 were in jail as the year ended, and hundreds more have been threatened, assaulted, beaten, and tortured. Less violent, but equally effective, repressive tactics continue around the globe.

In response, the Overseas Press Club’s Freedom of the Press Committee wrote more than 100 letters protesting abuses of press freedom around the world. The

committee has grown to nine members: Co-Chairmen Norman Schorr, Larry Martz, and Kevin McDermott, and members Bill Collins, John Langone, Jeremy Main, John Martin, Cait Murphy, and Minky Worden.

As the global spotlight focuses on the Middle East, *Dateline* will follow suit in this report, using the region as a case study of press freedom.

SEARCHING FOR PRESS FREEDOM IN THE Middle East is a discouraging assignment. With dismaying frequency, journalists in the region are intimidated, arrested, imprisoned, and tortured—and sometimes they are killed to silence their reporting forever. Governments shut down newspapers, ban satellite TV stations, and block Web publishers. Wars, and the prospect of war, provide new excuses for media cen-

sorship. In the past year, the OPC’s Freedom of the Press Committee has repeatedly protested abuses and come to the defense of reporters, photographers, broadcasters, and editors in Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the U.S., hopes for press liberalization in the Middle East were dashed by repressive new “anti-terror” legislation across the region. During the run-up to the war in Iraq, jittery dictatorships, military regimes, and theocracies tightened the screws to stifle opposition and maintain their power. As in most regions, the Internet continues to grow as a source of unfiltered news, but the Middle East as a whole has stubbornly resisted progress toward press freedom, transparency, and democracy.

News organizations in the Middle East confront a double-barreled threat, both from government censors and Islamic extremists. “Journalists are caught in a vise between fundamentalists and governments,” says Elahe Sharifpour-Hicks, who tracks Iran for Human Rights Watch. “The state will not protect reporters threatened by radical religious factions,

because [the bureaucrats] fear extremists too." With government censors looking over journalists' shoulders and militants ready to confront them in the streets, covering the news is a daily trial.

There is also the possibility of a literal trial, as governments or radical clerics often take reporters and editors to court. In Egypt, journalists can still be tried before military tribunals. In Qatar, journalists have been sentenced to death for "espionage." In Iran, where clerics control the judiciary, "press courts" have shut down papers that allegedly "spread propaganda against the Islamic revolution." The OPC committee has protested to all three governments.

Across the Arab Middle East, vague new "anti-terror" laws have enabled those in power to clamp down arbitrarily. Journalists who dare to criticize Mideast regimes are often singled out as targets. After Sept. 11, Jordan passed a broad range of new measures curbing press freedom. "Jordan's amendments give the government a sword to dangle over the heads of journalists," says Joel Campagna, Middle East and North Africa program coordinator for the Committee to Protect Journalists. "So far, no terrorists have been tried under the law, but journalists have certainly felt the effects."

Such harsh laws and public trials of prominent editors send a chilling message: Be careful what you write; you will pay for critical reporting. The resulting self-censorship is less public and less messy than outright repression, but just as effective in ensuring press obedience.

DURING THE FIRST GULF WAR IN 1991, and again in 2001 after the attacks on the U.S., nervous governments across the region cracked down on the press. As a new war against Iraq loomed, the pattern was being repeated. The OPC committee has protested the Syrian government's arrest of Ibrahim Hemaiddi, the Damascus bureau chief for the London-based Arabic daily *Al-Hayat*. He stands accused of "publishing false information" in an article about alleged Syrian preparations for an expected influx of Iraqi refugees in the event of a U.S.-led attack on Iraq. If convicted, Hemaiddi faces a prison sentence and heavy fines.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Kuwaiti officials have discussed restrictive new press legislation to increase security in the country, and other countries would almost surely follow suit in a war situation.

However, as the new technologies of satellite television and the Internet dramatically change the way journalists collect and distribute their information, the entire landscape is altered. Anyone with access to a computer can read news often unavailable in a local paper, and the profound effects of that development are only beginning to appear, especially in the major urban areas, where most of the region's 8 million Internet users are concentrated. Today the Internet, the Qatar-based satellite-news channel al-

monitor individual users, and post online propaganda. The backlash against the Internet is both ominous and growing.

The Middle East is anything but a monolithic region; its governments range from highly repressive to surprisingly tolerant of criticism and debate. As Hanny Megally, director of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa division, has observed, "One good test of media freedom in any Middle Eastern country is whether the papers feature a front-page photograph of the head of state every day."

The closed societies of Iraq, Libya, and Syria enjoy virtually no press freedom and tolerate no criticism of the government. One early test of any new administration in Baghdad will be whether truly inde-

pendent media take root in Iraq's formerly desert-like environment for press freedom.

In several semi-closed countries, repression of press freedom fluctuates with events, tightening up suddenly when the government invokes the harsh laws that enable crackdowns, then relaxing to periods of relative openness, more or less ignoring the laws—without, of course, repealing them.

In contrast to the closed societies, Iran has enjoyed a robust reformist press. But in recent years, fundamentalist clerics have rolled it back. Special press courts controlled by conservative cler-

ics began a vigorous campaign of closing newspapers and prosecuting journalists for "insulting Islamic sanctities." In 2002, the OPC protested the convictions of two journalists and the closing of three more papers, including the influential reformist newspapers *Foundation* (Bonyan) and *New Day* (Norouz). By the end of the year, the number of newspapers and magazines shut down since April, 2000, had reached more than 85.

In Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Kuwait, censorship and self-censorship ensure that little criticism of government makes it to public view. "Journalists understand instinctively where the 'red lines' are," says Megally. State security, military issues, and any reporting on royal families are completely off-limits. Citizens of these countries, denied independent news reports in their domestic publications, have turned to the World Wide Web in ever larger numbers. In response, government censors are now try-



**AL-JAZEERA STUDIOS IN QATAR:
AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE
CENSORED DOMESTIC MEDIA**

Jazeera, and its growing group of pan-Arab regional competitors offer the principal alternative to censored domestic media. Where television and the Web are not available, radio—including the BBC's Arabic service, Monte Carlo's French-Arabic service, and other regional broadcasters—is an alternative source of non-state-controlled information.

As Web use has expanded, however, governments in the region have become more sophisticated about cracking down on online media. New technologies give repressive regimes new tools. Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates all use proxy servers to block Web sites based on content—often justifying "filtering" with the excuse that they are blocking pornography. These governments also control Internet service providers,

ing to block Internet content. Tunisia has pioneered Web repression in the region. The committee denounced the jailing of cyber-publisher Souhair Yahyaoui after his satirical online magazine asked readers to vote on whether Tunisia is a "republic, a kingdom, a zoo, or a prison."

In Lebanon, once home to a healthy independent media, censors' concerns are about Syria, Lebanon's overlord. In September, Lebanese security officers raided private Lebanese TV and radio stations owned by Gabriel Murr, a member of Parliament who opposes Syria's influence in Lebanon. The stations were charged with "harming relations with Syria."

Jordan's intelligence services are very much in control of the press. While some topics can be reported with relative freedom, stiff laws discourage government criticism, and coverage of the king and the royal family is especially hazardous. In August, 2002, Jordan banned al-Jazeera from operating in the country—and kicked out the station's editors and reporters—after the station broadcast a program Jordanian authorities considered an insult to the royal family.

The press of Egypt influences opinion well beyond the country's borders, but it operates under numerous restrictions at home. In late February, 2003, as war threatened in Iraq, the Egyptian government abruptly renewed the country's repressive Emergency Law, under which Egypt has been governed since the 1967 war with Israel. The law gives the authorities broad powers to suspend basic liberties. They can arrest and hold people without trial for prolonged periods, try journalists in military or state security courts, and censor or close down newspapers in the name of national security. Torture by State Security Intelligence forces during detention is widespread.

In Saudi Arabia, a welcome change is in the air. The country's royal rulers may have begun to understand that their kingdom, closed for so long to the outside world, cannot stay impervious to the pressures for reform. In January, 2003, a Human Rights Watch delegation was invited for the first time to visit Riyadh. The delegates met with senior government officials, as well as with journalists and other outspoken representatives of Saudi civil so-

ciety. Then in February, 2003, the Saudi government approved the establishment of the first-ever press association. However, press freedom remains severely restricted, and it is still too early to speculate what this will mean for journalists in practical terms.

In Israel and the areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority, the violence that erupted in September, 2000, expanded in 2002, with the deadliest series of suicide bombings in decades. Journalists faced increasing hardship as the conflict escalated, including curfews, closures, checkpoints, and exposure to gunfire. "Harassment of journalists trying to cover this explosive story has intensified," says the CPJ's Campaign. Both the Israeli military and armed Palestinian groups have intimidated journalists, and independent journalists were often prevented from entering sites of military operations, such as the Jenin refugee camp. Although Israel's vibrant media print and broadcast in Hebrew, Arabic, English, Russian, and other languages, restrictions on coverage of military operations remain.

Turkey's lively, diverse, and highly com-



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petitive press presents a somewhat more hopeful picture. During 2002, Turkey's efforts to join the European Union led to a number of major reforms, including the removal of constraints on Kurdish-language broadcasting and publishing. However, as the threat of war in Iraq focused attention on the Kurds, Turkish courts continued to apply restrictive laws to prosecute journalists for coverage of military or Kurdish affairs (and many journalists previously prosecuted remain in jail).

As seen from the West, the repression of the Middle East media prevents the emergence of any meaningful debate—not only on the region's central conflict but also on public topics ranging from the nature of government and support for terrorism to the content of education and the growing regional water crisis. Instead, there are repeated, virulent diatribes against Israel and the U.S., which hinder constructive international dialogue.

Still, it is the people of the Middle

East themselves who suffer the most from the absence of free speech and limitations on the free press. Whether a war with Iraq or the broader war against terror takes months or years, the surest signs of liberalization will be seen in what Middle Easterners can say and read—and what they cannot. ■

Worden is electronic media director of Human Rights Watch and a member of the OPC's board of governors.

Trouble Spots: Dateline's Report on OPC Protests



**DHAKA:
BANGLADESHI
JOURNALISTS
PROTEST
COLLEAGUES'
HARASSMENT**

By Kevin McDermott

IN 2002, THE OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB'S Freedom of the Press Committee wrote more than 100 letters protesting abuses of press freedom around the world. The committee now numbers nine members: Co-Chairmen Norman Schorr, Larry Martz, and Kevin McDermott, and members Minky Worden, Bill Collins,

John Langone, Jeremy Main, John Martin, and Cait Murphy. Among the issues they addressed around the world:

The Middle East

IN ADDITION TO REPEATED PROTESTS TO the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority about abuses of press freedom and the increasing risks to journalists covering the conflict there, the OPC added

its voice to the defense of reporters and editors in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia. The protests addressed nearly all the issues raised in Minky Worden's article above.

Africa

TO VIEW AFRICA WITH DISCOURAGEMENT would be a dishonor to the nerve and resilience of journalists working across the

continent. In the face of inadequate resources, despotic press laws, prosecution, harassment, and occasional threats to their lives, African journalists persevere with bravery and professionalism.

A steadily emerging theme in the region is the spread of repressive press laws criminalizing "insults" to the state and its representatives. Algeria, for example, instituted legal action against several domestic journalists for "defaming" army officials. The OPC joined the Algerian Center for the Promotion of Press Freedom in its objections to these prosecutions.

In addition to its communications with the government of Algeria, the OPC came to the defense of colleagues in the Congo, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

In the Congo, a charge of "harmful accusations" is sufficient to earn a journalist heavy fines and jail time. Indeed, since President Joseph Kabila took office early in 2001, more than 40 journalists have been arrested on one charge or another. Similarly, colleagues in Liberia have been

arrested, and their newspapers shuttered, for having written articles that were deemed "not out for peace." In Zimbabwe, a "public order and security" bill was introduced that would allow the government to ban foreign journalists from working in the country. Authors of articles critical of President Robert Mugabe or the armed forces would be subject to severe punishment.

Such threats have teeth. The Eritrean government banned the activities of its entire independent media in 2001, and by September the Committee to Protect Journalists counted 18 reporters and editors held incommunicado in the country. That earned this small country the sad distinction of having jailed more journalists than any other African nation.

The Americas

IN THE SPRING, THE OPC EXPRESSED strong concern about the use of journalists as spies in an exchange with California Senator Barbara Boxer, whose subcommittee held hearings on the employment of journalists by the U.S. CIA. The Club held that the CIA should

never recruit journalists for intelligence work, arguing that one reason U.S. journalists have not suffered the high casualty rates of their counterparts in other countries is that they are largely perceived to be objective observers, not agents of their government. Reminding Boxer's committee that federal law prohibits the CIA from using journalists, the OPC stressed that the U.S. government should not take special measures to protect American journalists, actions that would in themselves compromise media independence.

In June, the OPC was a special observer at the InterAmerican Press Assn. conference in Washington, D.C. The news from the conference was broadly encouraging, but it also highlighted the difficulties, and too often the dangers, for reporters working in the region. Colombia, for example, was once again the deadliest country on earth for working journalists in 2002. In addition to multiple appeals on behalf of our Colombian colleagues, the OPC lent its support to vulnerable reporters and editors in Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Panama, and Venezuela.

The stubborn commitment of journal-

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ists in the Americas is an inspiration. In Haiti, for instance, death threats, harassment, physical attacks, and even the assassination of journalists have become commonplace, and all too often go unpunished. In July, the well-known radio reporter Israel Jacky Catave was forced into hiding after he was kidnapped and beaten—almost certainly in retaliation for his hard-hitting broadcasts on Radio Caraïbes.

Europe

THE USE OF FORMAL LEGAL SANCTIONS against journalists troublesome to governments is a source of concern to defenders of free expression around the world, particularly since these laws are increasingly justified as “anti-terrorist” measures. This was a repeated theme of the OPC’s communications to European governments, including Armenia, Belarus, Croatia, France, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, and Ukraine.

We joined Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF), for example, in protesting the apparent misuse of legal and police powers in France to hamper the legitimate activities of journalists. The abuses included wiretapping, detention, and even prosecution of journalists in an effort to compel them to disclose sources. The French Supreme Court has upheld the conviction of journalists for breaching the confidentiality of preliminary investigations because they disclosed documents related to a scandal involving wiretaps ordered by President Jacques Chirac. According to RSF, a total of 15 journalists were held for questioning, charged or convicted in 2001 for carrying out their duties. In January, *Le Monde* revealed that in its investigation of events in Corsica, it found that the French National Anti-Terrorist Service had tapped the phones of six journalists over the past two years.

Central Asia

THE ENDLESSLY COMPLEX POLITICS OF Central Asia make it an especially dangerous place for journalists. In 2002, the OPC spoke up on behalf of colleagues working in Bangladesh, India, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan.

The most notorious case was that of Daniel Pearl, the correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal* who was kidnapped

in January, and then killed several weeks later, by a group claiming to champion Pakistani sovereignty. Following Pearl’s murder, the OPC wrote to Pakistan’s President, Pervez Musharraf, commending his government for its active role in the search for Pearl’s killers. The Club wrote to Musharraf again in November following the murder of Shahid Soomro, a 26-year-old journalist for the Sindi-language daily *Kawish*. Soomro, too, was kidnapped and subsequently murdered, evidently in retaliation for his reporting on an influential local family with extremist Islamic links.

Less active in defense of a free press is Kazakhstan, a country that observed World Press Freedom Day in 2001 by adding newly restrictive amendments to its Mass Media Law. Those changes tight-



CARACAS: REMEMBERING JORGE TORTOZA, KILLED COVERING A DEMONSTRATION IN THAT CITY

ened Kazakhstan’s libel laws, making it easier to prosecute editors and publishers who criticize government officials. In March, a funeral wreath was received by Irina Petrushova, the editor of *Respublika*, an opposition weekly. Two months later, employees of the newspaper discovered the decapitated corpse of a dog hanging in a window at their offices, accompanied by a threatening note; three days later, Molotov cocktails were thrown through the office windows. On July 4, Petrushova received an 18-month suspended prison sentence for working illegally in Kazakhstan because she is not a citizen. On July 24, Kazakhstan authorities ordered the liquidation of the company that publishes *Respublika*.

Asia

EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD, THE STRESS of national crisis has inevitable fallout for practicing journalists. There’s no better example than Nepal. The country’s state of emergency—declared in 2001—was renewed in May; press freedom has been foremost among the civil liberties to be restricted. Within eight months, more than 100 journalists in the country had been arrested on a variety of charges allowable under the emergency decree. Reports of abuse have become commonplace, including allegations of torture, despite assurance from the Nepalese government that neither the army nor the police violate human rights.

The tension between what a government perceives as national self-interest and the irritant of free expression is obvious everywhere in Asia—not only in Nepal but also in China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Bangladesh, and Vietnam. Most often, this tension originates as friction within governments that pursue economic development without recognizing that free expression is a prerequisite for development.

Both Vietnam and China, for instance, have struggled to reconcile the huge potential of the Internet with their authoritarian instinct to control information. In Vietnam, Le Chi Quang was among several writers arrested for allegedly “subversive” writings on the Internet. Quang’s arrest appears to have been triggered by his writing on matters such as border agreements with China, trade with the U.S., and an essay praising well-known dissidents. He awaits trial in Hanoi.

In China, Internet essayist Chen Shaowen was arrested on suspicion of “using the Internet to subvert state power,” according to the official newspaper *Hunan Daily*. Throughout the summer of 2002, China’s central government closed some 2,400 Internet cafés, ostensibly to carry out safety checks after a fatal fire in one of them. To be relicensed, however, owners must install Web-filtering technologies. Among the sites blocked by the filters are the search engines Google, Yahoo!, and AltaVista. ■



“COMMITMENT PAYS OFF”

CJR January/February 2002

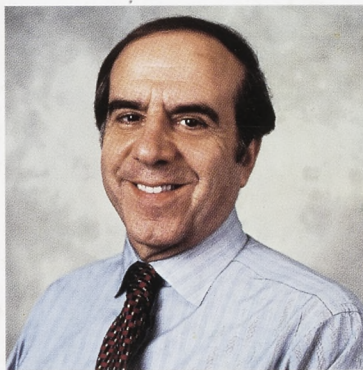
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